

**FLANNER HOUSE**

**HIGHER**

**LEARNING**

**CENTER**

**CHARTER SCHOOL  
PROPOSAL**

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## **Executive Summary**

Flanner House of Indianapolis, Inc., located in the Near Northwest area of Indianapolis, is a 103-year-old educational and child development center originally established to serve African-American families migrating to the state from the South. It is the oldest social service agency serving African-Americans in Indiana. Its largest components are a Child Development Center, its Multi-Service Center, and Flanner House Academy, a first through third grade private school now in the process of becoming Flanner House Elementary (FHE), a public charter school sponsored by the Mayor of Indianapolis.

The Flanner House Higher Learning Center (FHHLC), a new high school for at-risk youth, will have a separate Board and legal structure from all existing Flanner House entities (including FHE), but will retain the ability to draw upon the experience and resources of its founding organization. It will establish an innovative neighborhood-learning center within the HUD development district that now surrounds Flanner House. This will be a computer-enhanced learning environment serving high school students and dropouts to increase their capacity to be successful learners.

The mission of Flanner House Higher Learning Center is to teach and support present and potential high school dropouts to maximize their learning potential and fully motivate them to be successful in school and in life. In the planning stage for almost two years, FHHLC is based upon the extensive expertise Flanner House has gained from operating an established and very successful private school. It will greatly expand educational services to community families through providing additional resources to do a better job. We will provide the leadership, stability, experience, and discipline for every student to excel. Our intention is to continue to set higher standards and expectations for minority students, and to motivate them to consistently achieve these standards—something now sorely lacking in our city's public school system. We feel strongly that Flanner House's years of experience, strong community and citywide support, and recognition of our past successes provide the foundation for launching a truly innovative and successful community-based high school.

The neighborhood surrounding FHHLC remains one of the poorest and most crime-ridden in the city. Perhaps its greatest need is for a consistent quality education for youth who are slipping through the cracks. This remains the motivation for launching a new high school. FHHLC is an innovative approach to supporting the many thousands of minority youths within the public school system that are currently at-risk of dropping out, or have already done so, because of the failure of existing and more traditional public school environments to adequately address their needs:

- We will capitalize on the many years of experience of Flanner House as a social service and community center providing services for youth (and administering an on-site GED program) to target, support, and effectively reach this population.
- Learning will be accelerated through a curriculum that has proven extremely successful for at-risk populations in other states, making full utilization of technology and mentorship programs and combining self-paced, computer-evaluated learning activities with more traditional off-line classroom instruction.
- We will be housed in the current Flanner House facility, which will undergo an extensive renovation that will also provide a separate space for social service and senior citizen's programs, as part of our current \$13,500,000 capital campaign.

- All students *and their families* will be able to access support services free-of-charge from the many social service and counseling programs Flanner House provides, thus alleviating many of the circumstances that have forced so many youths to drop-out of school.
- And we will utilize a \$350,000 scholarship fund to interest and motivate our students in not only graduating, but also going on to college.

In all of these ways, FHHLC will offer a far more viable alternative to attracting, keeping and supporting current and potential dropouts than any other public school in the metro area.

Perhaps the most unique feature of FHHLC is its partnership with USA Funds, which has committed \$220,000 in start-up funding over the first two years, as well as another \$350,000 in scholarship funds for graduates who plan to go on to college and other post-graduate programs. These funds will provide a tremendous incentive for students to graduate, make it easier for FHHLC to recruit new students, and allow us to offer a highly innovative and viable model for teaching and training present and prospective dropouts.

FHHLC will utilize the proven HUDDLE Learning model as its core computer program. This model has recently been adopted by three charter schools in other states because of its strategic application to at-risk populations. Its focus on educational advancement within customized time elements supports its current use to address the special needs of dropouts. Customization is made possible for each participant's learning needs with the help of computer-monitored proficiency-based educational programs. The computer also assists in monitoring all students' databased decisions to ensure they are never asked to move beyond their abilities, helping to strengthen and maintain their motivation for learning.

FHHLC's proposed educational goals entail performance objectives (relating to ISTEP test scores and overall mastery of coursework); organizational viability (regarding strategic planning and a summer retreat); and school-specific objectives (regarding stakeholder satisfaction, graduation rates, and post-graduate follow-up). These specific goals are important in both establishing obtainable objectives and ensuring accountability on the part of all school stakeholders. They will permit us to measure our performance against our mission and vision.

FHHLC has identified as its leader a highly motivated and very successful local principal with a keen interest in at-risk students, who will come aboard part-time beginning in October. He will be joined by Cynthia Diamond, a key force behind the creation of the school, who will serve part-time as School Director and work closely with the Principal in all administrative tasks. As its Board Chair, Moses Gray brings 30 years of management experience from both corporations and community-based organizations. He has served in a leadership capacity at the Indianapolis Urban League, the Indiana University Foundation, the Indiana Vocational Technical College, and numerous other organizations. Significantly, Moses is currently the CEO of a community health center providing services to the near north side.

In addition, SchoolStart, a non-profit with extensive experience with charter schools, will aid FHHLC through providing advise on implementation of our objectives and ensuring that all of initiatives remain on schedule. Its staff has been instrumental in helping to launch FHE through providing experience with the more technical and logistical aspects of the start-up process.

FHHLC's partnership with USA Funds (including Pamela Poore, a member of our Advisory Council) creates a tremendous incentive for students both attend and graduate. We have also established multiple partnerships with agencies such as the UNWA (United Northwest Area, our local community organization), Casey Family Programs and Flanner House itself, to refer youth who have dropped out of school or are at risk of doing so, but now are determined to graduate. Partnerships with non-profits such as Indiana Black Expo will provide both mentorship and on-site educational workshops to our students.

In addition to the substantial support of USA Funds, FHHLC will receive support from a carefully planned \$13,500,000 capital campaign that is now being launched on the Flanner site. This campaign will provide both financial resources to the school and a newly renovated site for all school functions. It will help to make available an adjacent gym, public library, auditorium, arboretum, and athletic fields. It will also allow students *and their families* to access (in a separate part of the facility) the wide range of no-cost social services (including counseling, employment, housing, child development, and senior care) that Flanner House provides, helping to ensure that students do not leave school because of pressing non-academic concerns.

Other initial funding will likely from the Federal Start-Up grant and other federal programs, and from the Walton Family Foundation, which provides substantial support to schools working with SchoolStart.

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# Full Application Narrative Outline

## 1. Our Vision

### A. Mission

The mission of Flanner House Higher Learning Center is to teach and support present and potential high school dropouts to maximize their learning potential and fully motivate them to be successful in both school and in life.

### B. Need

African-Americans compose approximately 58% of students enrolled in the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS), which have a total minority enrollment of 67.8 %. Based on the data from the 2000-2001 academic year, an estimated 56% of IPS' African-American students will never graduate from high school ("High School Graduation Rates in the United States," a study by the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research undertaken for the Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO)). This means that less than half of the African-American students in Indianapolis will be able to secure jobs that require high school degrees, and most of their earnings will be limited to living wage incomes. This situation is not shared by most white children, who are graduating and going on to college at a far higher rate.

IPS currently has 41,000 students enrolled, with 58.6% African-Americans and 6.3% Hispanics (taken from "Indianapolis Public Schools Teacher Recruitment and Retention", published October, 2001, and presented by Carole Craig). That means that over 24,000 African-Americans are currently in the system; and 56% of these, or approximately 13,500 African-American students, will never graduate.

This figure only represents those students currently enrolled, and only the IPS African-American population. It does not include all other potential dropouts, or those in the metro area but attending schools outside of the IPS system. Nor does it include many "hidden" or unreported dropouts that the school district might have lost track of. With a projected full enrollment of 175, FHHLC can only serve a tiny percentage of these students, yet it has an enormous potential pool from which to draw.

In addition, relatively few of those students that remain in high school are being prepared for college and better-paying jobs. For example, among IPS' African-American tenth graders, only 28% passed the ISTEP in language arts during the 2000-2001 academic year, with only 26% passing in math (Manhattan Institute for Policy Research). At two local public high schools, the percentages of all students (both white and non-white) taking the SAT exam required for college admissions in most states during the 2000-2001 school year were 35% and 16%, respectively -- compared to 54% for *all* Indiana high school students.

It is clear that unacceptable numbers of students attending local public schools have dropped out of school and are no longer progressing towards graduation or a higher education. These will never acquire the knowledge they need to be successful participants in our society and to effectively contribute to the economic lifeblood of Indianapolis. Yet our city's economic future depends on accessing a well educated, highly motivated, and creative workforce to fill high-tech, life science, and numerous other emerging employment needs.

In the year 2000, 81.6 % of residents of Marion County had high school diplomas, and only 64.6% of residents in Center Township. The median household income in the township was only \$26,435. There is little doubt that the substantial number of households with children not graduating from high school has kept this figure far lower than it otherwise might have been.

### *“Dropping In”*

Traditional school districts have put a tremendous amount of resources into examining and attempting to deal with the dropout phenomena, including developing strategies—largely unsuccessful—to cut the dropout rate. In contrast, few if any funds have been allocated towards developing a truly effective plan to encourage “*drop-ins*” – students who might want to return to school if presented with a viable option to graduate.

*FHHLC feels that it is necessary that the mindset of fear of failure and the lack of hope, support, opportunity and motivation that so often underlies the dropout problem is concretely addressed.* A basic reason dropout strategies have not worked well in the past is that the underlying causes for leaving school do not change. For many students, memories of huge enrollments, often uncaring or indifferent teachers and programs, repetitive learning that offered little relevance to the outside world, and a lack of adequate help for learning deficiencies were combined with very real and pressing personal, social, family and/or financial issues. For tens of thousands of youths, these create ample excuses for not graduating, as well as a tremendous barrier to staying in or reentering a traditional academic environment. Most alternative programs, however effective, are not designed to prepare their students for college and better paying jobs, but rather to ensure that they obtain basic skills and/or get their diploma or GED. What has been lacking is a model specifically designed to attract and educate present and potential urban dropouts that addresses all of these issues effectively.

### *The Higher Learning Center Model*

The neighborhood surrounding Flanner House Higher Learning Center (FHHLC) is one of the poorest and most crime-ridden in the city. Perhaps its greatest need is for an opportunity for quality education for the many who have slipped through the cracks. FHHLC, in the planning stage for almost two years and originally envisioned as a local school partnership, represents an innovative technology-based approach to high school education that can serve students who have failed to adapt to a traditional school environment:

- FHHLC will capitalize on the many years of experience of Flanner House as a social service and community center providing services to African-American youths (and administering an on-site GED program) to target, support, and effectively reach this population.
- Learning will be accelerated through a curriculum that has proven extremely successful in other states, making full utilization of technology and mentorship programs and combining self-paced, computer-evaluated learning activities with more traditional off-line instruction to establish an innovative solution to at-risk learning.
- FHHLC will be housed in the current Flanner House facility, which will undergo a full renovation while providing a separate space for social service programs, as part of a \$13,500,000 capital campaign (See “A Commitment to Educational Excellence,” [Appendix A](#)). In a “wrap-around” approach, all students and their families will be able to access support services free-of-charge under the umbrella of the many social service and counseling programs Flanner House now provides, thus alleviating the circumstances that originally led many of them to drop-out of school.
- FHHLC will utilize a \$350,000 scholarship fund donated by USA Funds to fully interest and motivate our students to go on to college or other higher learning opportunities.



The National Urban League recently completed its annual report, entitled “The State of Black America,” which was highlighted in the *Indianapolis Star* on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Sam Jones, Director of the Indianapolis chapter, pointed to the importance of “a scholarship program which pushes academic and social development among high school students” as one of the few local success stories. Significantly, Jones also highlighted the black unemployment rate, which at 10.7% remains more than double that of whites. He reiterated that opportunities for employment are directly tied to a successful education, and more specifically, graduation from high school and advancement to college.

Increasing opportunities for inner city students to succeed lies at the core of our mission. FHHLC will offer a far more viable alternative to attracting, keeping and supporting present and potential dropouts than any other public school in the metro area.

### **C. Goals**

Henry Levin (Levin, Accelerated Schools: A New Strategy for At-Risk Students, 1989) and Robert Slavin (Slavin, Karweit, & Madden, Effective Classroom Programs for Students at-risk, 1998) propose that schools should provide an academic curriculum designed to challenge *all* students. For students at-risk academically, this means designing a plan that will result in catching up with their peers. The curriculum must be rigorous and inspiring for all. For core curriculum objectives to be met by all students:

- Students should not be arbitrarily restricted from learning opportunities through rigid tracking.
- High performance standards should be set.
- Effective programs must be based upon raising expectations.
- Programs must provide vivid examples, interesting applications, and challenging problems rather than emphasizing repetitive learning.
- Finally, timelines must be established for bringing students back into the mainstream.

All of these goals and practices lie at the core of FHHLC’s philosophy for teaching and training at-risk and dropout youths. Examples of our benchmarks follow:

#### Academic Performance Objectives

- 65% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders (based on their number of credits) will pass the ISTEP English/Language Arts and Mathematics tests.

For the 2000-2001 Academic Year, only 35% of African-American tenth graders passed both portions of this test. (Researched by the Manhattan Institute for Policy Studies on behalf of the Black Alliance for Educational Options.) We feel that with the discipline, focus, and technology available at FHHLC, 65% is a doable figure.

- A majority of students will achieve an 80% mastery of their course objectives in their core subject areas (math, language arts, science and social studies) and electives using the A+ assessment system.

Again, this will represent a significant achievement considering our target audience. Also, we feel strongly that these educational goals are achievable given the program and tools we have designed.

#### Organizational Viability:

- All key stakeholders involved in FHHLC (including founders, board, staff and partners) will undergo a strategic retreat prior to August 1, 2003 focused on teamwork, mission, and planning.

FHHLC's founders feel strongly that all stakeholders in the school community must share a common vision and learn to communicate with and trust one another. This in-depth retreat will be held as soon as key teaching and staff positions are filled.

- FHHLC will recruit staff members versed in three areas: (1) working with dropout and at-risk populations, (2) computer-enhanced learning, and (3) a specific area of curricular concentration (i.e.: history, math, science).

Because of the particular mission of FHHLC, teachers with broad experience in the above areas will be sought. Both computer training and familiarity with at-risk students will be essential.

#### School-Specific Objectives:

- By the beginning of FHHLC's second year, at least 75% of students who entered FHHLC will graduate.

As the student body will be composed entirely of students who have dropped out of school or are in danger of doing so, this will be a significant but attainable achievement.

- 80% of all students, staff and parents (if applicable) will report high levels of satisfaction with FHHLC on multiple measures.

Increased satisfaction will be measured by customer satisfaction surveys administered in the spring of each year, with specific questions regarding areas in which the school is doing well, and others in which it needs to improve. Satisfaction will be judged by factors such as the quality of former school environments, anticipated results from attending or teaching at FHHLC, and satisfaction with teaching and other staff.

#### Additional Objectives

- All FHHLC students will be required (unless prevented by a mental or physical condition) to spend at least 5 hours a month in a service learning project during each school year.

Flanner House is about giving and instilling service to the community. We feel that it is imperative that all students learn the importance of giving something back.

- In addition to the above, FHHLC intends to track its graduates to determine the overall effect of our program on their lives. This will be particularly relevant as FHHLC will be able to provide college scholarships to many of those seeking higher educational options. Based on this follow-up, we have set the following additional goals:
  - 80% of our graduates will acknowledge that FHHLC made a positive contribution to their lives.
  - At least 30% of our graduates will go on to a college, university, or vocational/technical school.

## **II. Who We Are**

### **A. Description of Founding Group**

FHHLC has been in the planning stage for almost two years. Its recent emergence as an independent charter school holds promise in terms of its core mission and objectives. A great number of people have been involved in creating the concept of the school over this time period:

1. A driving force behind the school has been Flanner House itself, which has looked for a way to effectively serve the many youth who are its clients and those living in the surrounding neighborhood who are either unemployed or in low-paying jobs because they did not complete high school. Many employees and volunteers at Flanner House have played key roles in founding the high school.
2. *Cynthia Diamond*, Flanner House's Executive Director, has been a driving force behind FHHLC. Her many years of experience as a social worker and case manager provided her with a special motivation for serving at-risk youth and their families. Cynthia began working as a Lead Counselor at Flanner House in 1980, and subsequently served as Acting Director and Director of its Multi-Service Center until 1984. She returned as Executive Director last year after many years working at the Children's Bureau of Indianapolis, and soon led the drive to create Flanner House Elementary, one of the first charter schools in the state to offer better public school options for children. Cynthia has forged strong connections and partnerships with numerous organizations and non-profits serving children and their families across Indiana. She will be devoting 25% of her time to FHHLC as its School Director.
3. Another early founding component has been USA Funds, which has teamed with HUDDLE Learning, Inc., to provide the money and expertise needed to put FHHLC's innovative technology curriculum in place. Don Fast and Maureen Weiss, as founders of HUDDLE Learning, have a combined 46 years experience in working with educational systems. As the senior executives of HUDDLE Learning, Inc., they plan to spend between 50 and 100 days on-site in implementing their system during FHHLC's first year of operations (as part of their consulting contract).
4. SchoolStart has also played a key advisory role in making the school a reality. Its participation is outlined under the Governance and Management section below.
5. FHHLC has recruited an experienced local principal who has a special interest in working with the student population that forms the core of our school's mission, and who will come on board part-time in October to help set our basic systems in place. This individual has a track record in developing innovative and effective programming for at-risk students, with great success. He has begun to volunteer his time to help in planning the school.
6. *Gwen Kelley* has recently joined the Flanner House charter schools' team as Curriculum and Assessment Specialist. Gwen recently retired from a supervisory position as the Instructional Services Coordinator for the IPS Curriculum and Instruction Division, a position she held from 1996 to 2002. *Gwen was in charge of facilitating development of the curriculum for all IPS schools in grades K-12 in all subject areas!* In addition to working on curriculum, assessment and standards, she will offer continuing professional development to FHHLC's staff.
7. *Deneen Owens* is currently working half time as business manager for Flanner House Elementary. Beginning in November, Deneen will work a remaining .5 FTE (until September of 2003) as Start-Up Coordinator for FHHLC. As the school's opening approaches, she will transition to the position of Business Manager for FHHLC. A graduate of Clark Atlanta

University, she also holds a Master's in Business Administration. In her former position with American Trans Air, she was responsible for managing several asset and liability accounts (including but not limited to the company's purchasing card program with annual activity in excess of \$11 million) as well as supervising an internal auditing team.

8. *Moses Gray*, our Board Chair, brings 30 years of management experience from corporations and community-based organizations. He has served in a board or leadership capacity with the Indianapolis Urban League, the Indiana University Foundation, the Indiana Vocational Technical College, and numerous other organizations. Moses is currently the CEO of a community health center providing services to the near north side.
9. *Richard Skirvin*, MSW, also a member of FHHLC's board, is Program Manager at RTC Resource, a residential unit providing individual, family, and group therapy. Richard brings a full range of clinical skills and knowledge gained from over 20 years of working with children and adolescents. At Lutherwood, he was the clinician for an open dorm setting for adolescent males and worked closely with the OFC, the Juvenile Justice System and the Department of Education. He has served on a wide variety of boards, tasks forces, and advisory committees.
10. *William Petty*, a FHHLC board member, is an account manager who has worked for over 30 years in media and sales marketing. He has served as a marketing consultant with radio, television, and new media. A past member of the board of Project Impact (an organization that serves at-risk youth), he currently serves as Board Chair for Community Action of Greater Indianapolis.
11. *Shelvy Kegl*, Ph.D., also on FHHLC's board, is a clinical psychologist and President of Midwest Psychological Center, Inc. She is co-chair and founder of the Indiana Minority Health Coalition.

Note that no board members have conflicts of interest with the school. Information regarding current school leaders is contained in Appendix B.

## **B. Community Partnerships**

FHHLC is well positioned to access partnerships with mentorship and tutoring organizations in the metro area. First among these will be Flanner House itself, whose wrap-around services will be a core complement to the academic focus of the school. Flanner House is also directly associated with many community organizations that it can direct towards FHHLC for specific partnership activities.

Other partnerships include:

- Indiana Black Expo has offered to help in areas such as media, public communications and leadership training.
- The Indianapolis Marion County Public Library is constructing a new branch a few minutes from the school. It will be located on Flanner's campus and provide direct access to research materials for all FHHLC students.
- The Indianapolis Parks Department is making Watkins Family Center available for physical education purposes, as well as providing adjacent playing fields. It has also provided the land to Flanner House.
- UNWA (The United Northwest Area Development Corporation) will help in recruitment and in outreach to families and the community.

- Casey Family Programs, which helps current and former foster youth in transitioning towards independent adulthood, will help in recruitment of students and referral.
- A pool of volunteers will provide mentorship and tutoring services for FHHLC youth.

Partnership letters are contained as Appendix C.

### **III. Educational Services Provided**

#### **A. Educational Philosophy**

Flanner House, the parent social service and educational agency that spawned FHHLC, is located in the Near Northwest area of Indianapolis. It is a 103-year-old educational, social service and child development center originally established to serve African-American families migrating to the state from the South. It is the oldest social service agency serving African-Americans in Indiana. Four years ago Flanner House began Flanner House Academy, a first through third grade private school now transitioning into a public charter school--Flanner House Elementary (FHE), sponsored by the Mayor.

The Flanner House Higher Learning Center (FHHLC) will have a separate Board and legal structure from all existing Flanner House entities (including FHE), but will retain the ability to draw upon the experience and extensive resources of its founding organization. Though a public school, its students and their families will have full access to multiple on-site social services, including counseling, employment, child care, and housing referral. In fact, many of these will be housed in a separate wing of the same building FHHLC occupies. Such an arrangement will help to ensure that our students do not leave school because of personal, financial or family concerns beyond their control (a leading cause of dropping-out).

The vision and purpose of FHHLC also corresponds to educational reforms on a national level initiated with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. This Act is the most sweeping reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since it was enacted in 1965. Completely redefining the federal role in K-12 education, this act's purpose is to help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers. *No Child Left Behind* is based on four basic principles: stronger accountability for results; increased flexibility and local control; expanded options for parents; and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work.

#### *The Uniqueness of FHHLC's Approach*

In researching material for this proposal, Flanner House encountered relatively few individuals who had done field research with "dropping in." One of these is Charles Pickney, a Carolina-based consultant and lecturer who shares many common interests with FHHLC's principal. Mr. Pinkney is completing his PhD in counseling and academic psychology, and has undertaken research all over the country. He has given national workshops and seminars on subjects such as "Motivating Hard-to-Serve At-Risk Youth," "Understanding and Reaching the At-Risk Population," and "An Effective Wrap-Around Program for At-Risk Youth," at locations ranging from the 2001 Governors' Conference on Children and Youth to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual National Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors Conference. He is the author of numerous articles and papers such as "Understanding the Hip-Hop Culture."

While involved in a study of the school system in Camden, New Jersey (where only 20% of students graduated), Pickney began to ask, "If students drop out, why can't they drop back in?"

He has this to say about FHHLC's "wrap-around" (multi-serviced) approach:

"In my research, I have found no existing programs like yours other than alternative and night schools, and these are not really promoted as "drop-in" programs. In fact, in terms of research on "drop-ins," it simply doesn't exist. You will be writing it. Public schools don't specifically target this population. Honestly, and this is hard to believe, you will be serving as the model or pilot for the entire nation.

This is a totally new concept, something that will take the educational world by storm. Most districts don't want these kids in their school systems, and that's one of the reasons so many are dropping out. Most students who drop out feel that they're not wanted in school anyway. In terms of their dropping back in, you can't have a piecemeal program and succeed: you have to deal with the entire person. It has to be designed to reinforce each student so that they know you respect them and that you look to them as a potential leader for their peers. They need to know they count as individuals and that you truly believe in them. Indianapolis has a huge dropout rate. No one has approached these kids about being successful."

Pickney's research indicates that the main reasons youths drop out are:

- 1) lack of support in school
- 2) feeling disrespected by administrators and/or staff
- 3) financial and personal issues (lack of adequate resources)
- 4) lack of parental support
- 5) substance abuse
- 6) inability to see any light at the end of the tunnel, leaving no motivation to graduate ("school is a joke" and there is no benefit to being there or graduating)

Pickney stressed the importance of the type of "wrap-around" approach at FHHLC (in which students are presented with a wide range of both social and educational services) as the best way to confront the above issues. He is enthusiastic about the program and repeatedly expressed a willingness to help out in any way in terms of its design and implementation.

#### *Using Technology as a Method for Reaching At-Risk Youth*

Opportunities now exist for creating new models for learning that go beyond the structure of most existing schools and capture the technological advances of the present day. Technology is moving forward so rapidly that it is difficult for individuals to stay current with ongoing advancements. One rapidly advancing area is internet-delivered and computer-based learning opportunities. Business and industry are using these mediums to enable their workers to stay current with rapidly changing technologies. Schools, by contrast, have been slower to utilize these approaches. In part, this represents a major shift in thinking to move from a dependence on human-delivered learning to incorporate these newer forms. Instead, computers have been viewed as tools to reinforce classroom-based, teacher-delivered learning. Yet an increasing number of successful national charter schools are finding that students can receive courses via the computer or the Internet, and that these can be supplemented and explained with the help of on-site teachers and mentors. Among numerous examples are the Florida Virtual High School and the University of Nebraska's Virtual Learning Center. These programs, however, often remain out of reach of the high school non-completer or those with sub-par grade, due to academic pre-requisites.

The purpose of the present proposal is to establish a state-of-the-art neighborhood-learning center, focused on a new charter high school, within the HUD development district that now surrounds Flanner House. This will be a computer-enhanced learning center serving high school students and dropouts to increase their capacity to be successful learners. *Its facilities will also serve the neighborhood's adult population by creating the opportunity to upgrade expanded basic skills at those times and months (such as the summer) when it is not utilized as a high school.* These skills will allow neighborhood adults to use the school to develop technology skills that directly translate into work force skills, sought after by business and industry—while also teaching these same skills to high school students. Through this multi-generational learning, school-age children will be able to interact with their parents as learners. This model offers tremendous potential to many lower socio-economic neighborhoods in Indianapolis.

Frank Brown, from Middle Tennessee State University, conducted one of the more complete studies on the effect of computer-assisted instruction on learner achievement. His focus was on mathematics in a large urban North Carolina public school system. Conducted over a two-year period, it involved students from 3 schools in 11 different classes. The study demonstrated that the students who utilized computer-assisted instruction scored significantly higher than the students who did not participate (with a 99.5% confidence level). For example, algebra students using the technology made a 17% jump in scores (Brown, *Computer-Assisted Instruction in Mathematics Can Improve Students' Test Scores: A Study*, ERIC: Middle Tennessee State University, microfilm ED443688, 2000).

Perhaps the most unique feature of FHHLC is its partnership with USA Funds, which has committed to both a \$220,000 school endowment and a \$350,000 scholarship fund for graduates who want to go on to higher education. *These funds will be available only if FHHLC opens by the fall of 2003.* The scholarships will provide a tremendous incentive to students to graduate, make it easy to recruit new students, and allow us to offer a highly innovative and viable model for teaching and training present and prospective dropouts.

FHHLC will utilize the proven HUDDLE Learning model as its core computer program because of its easy application to at-risk populations. Customization is made possible for each participant's learning needs with the help of computer-monitored proficiency-based educational programs. The computer assists in monitoring a student's databased decisions to ensure students are never asked to move beyond their abilities. With the help of ongoing computerized instruction, students can avoid the possibility of humiliation from classmates due to different learning needs and/or their inability to learn within a specified timeframe. This is especially important in maintaining the self-esteem of at-risk students. This process results in an educational environment that embodies a constantly improving clientele skill set and organizational enhancement based on individual needs.

HUDDLE is an acronym for “Helping Undo the Digital Divide by Learning Electronically.” With the financial support of USA Funds, HUDDLE Learning is building 25 centers that will utilize computer-based technology to help educate at-risk students or those from low socio-economic backgrounds. Through eliminating the “hassle factors” associated with re-entry into the educational arena, this program helps school dropouts to rededicate themselves by obtaining the necessary skill sets required to succeed in today's economy. It is already being used in three charter schools in Kansas, including the Crawford County Charter School in Pittsburgh and the Peoria Street Charter School in Louisburg. (Both of these Kansas schools have high school programs.) Note that while nationally re-entry programs lose approximately 70% of their students before graduation, HUDDLE-based centers are currently retaining between 60 and 65%.

This educational delivery model has been designed to undo this “digital divide” by creating a success-oriented educational environment that builds self-esteem and develops an attitude of “embracing change and responsible risk-taking.” This model also delivers educational opportunity in a cost-effective manner, and a manner in which success can be defined and measured by creating monitoring tools to encourage well-positioned learning changes to adjust to today's labor market.

FHHLC will also utilize multiple approaches that build upon students' existing strengths and make connections with their life experiences. In addition to providing a platform for completing high school, technology programs have one other strong advantage. They prepare students for the world of work, giving them an awareness of the need for flexible skills in an environment of changing technology. Students will leave school appreciating the opportunities for enterprise available through the creative application of technology and having a strong background in essential computer skills.

#### *Cultural Ethos*

FHHLC is committed to ensuring that no student falls behind. Teachers will work closely with special needs instructors and consultants to ensure special needs students progress according to their abilities. FHHLC will also utilize the resources of the Indiana Public School (with whom Flanner House is partnering in many current educational programs) as a resource, particularly for Limited English Proficient learners.

FHHLC will emphasize the same ethos that made Flanner House Academy successful (and is being carried forth by Flanner House Elementary). Its elements are simple:

- A spirit of respect and high expectations between and among all students and staff.
- The expectation that every student will achieve *to the best of his or her ability*. There is no compromise with this.
- An emphasis on personal responsibility that extends to attendance, behavior, homework and schoolwork, service learning, and discipline.
- Instilling pride in the school and in each student for what they can and will achieve.
- Always seeing the potential of every individual, rather than just his or her problems.
- Supplying support for students as real people that might require non-school services (provided by Flanner's Multi-Service Center and others) for themselves and their families.
- A focus on future achievement rather than on the past.

Few of the students at FHHLC will have had, on the whole, positive experiences with their education. FHHLC must change that expectation. Some of this will depend on the staff and founders, and much on the students themselves. We will ask all students to be responsible for any task they have set in front of them.

In essence, FHHLC will adopt the same “No Excuses” approach used by Flanner House Elementary, and that was a standard of its predecessor, Flanner House Academy. This approach has proved incredibly successful in inner city schools all over the country, especially when dealing with at-risk populations. (See No Excuses: Lessons from 21 High-Performing, High-Poverty Schools by Samuel Casey Carter, or visit [www.noexcuses.org](http://www.noexcuses.org).)

In a high school environment for at-risk students, this means that a student will have no excuse to fail; all traditional excuses simply no longer apply. FHHLC will have a non-traditional academic day and environment; computers instead of formal classrooms; scholarships for those wishing to go onto college or technical school; a strict disciplinary policy; and counseling and social service support,



including employment referrals that permit students to work part-time during the school day. Students with learning, language, or other disabilities will be given all appropriate support.

Two school values critical to our ethos are:

(1) An awareness of the importance of clear communications regarding expectations, responsibilities, and feedback between students and staff and among the staff itself.

FHHLC has set as one of its organizational goals a retreat where communications will become clearer and methods of resolving potential disputes established.

(2) Students at FHHLC will not just receive, but also give. FHHLC will require that each student (unless prevented by a mental or physical condition) spend at least 5 hours a month in a service-learning project during the school year. If necessary, FHHLC will work with organizations such as the Center for Youth as Resources and the Indiana Department of Education's Learn and Serve America program to help fund these efforts.

### *The Association of Flanner House Schools (AFHS)*

The Association of Flanner House Schools will be an independent non-profit, initially composed of Flanner House Elementary and Flanner House Higher Learning Center. Though working with students with different ages and backgrounds, each school will share Flanner House's commitment to a culture embodying mutual respect, enthusiasm, strict discipline, shared responsibility, core values, and consistent educational quality. In participating as a partner in AFHS, each school will commit to the following parameters:

send one representative to AFHS's Board.

have its own individual Board and be a separate 501c3.

agree to invoke strict quality and ethical standards.

share, whenever appropriate, centralized fundraising for all AFHS schools to maximize funding potential.

share in support and professional development initiatives.

commit to remaining small, parent-responsive, creative, and community-based.

share a "no excuses" focus, treating every child as gifted.

share Flanner House's interaction with families and the community through collaborative on-site counseling and social services.

integrally include parents as volunteers, active participants, and Board members.

offer a high quality academic education.

## **B. Academic Standards**

By using the A+ software described in the curriculum section below, all FHHLC students will be assessed against the Indiana standards with any voids or gaps in learning being quickly identified. This system permits additional learning activities to allow each student to master his or her particular content needs. Thus each student is able to have an individual plan for learning that is benchmarked against the Indiana standards and prepares the student for the Indiana Qualifying Exam. Students can also access their own progress reports' increasing their personal understanding of their learning progress.

An additional standard required by FHHLC will include participation in at least five hours per month of service activities for all students.

The FHHLC curriculum goals are based on the skills specified by the HUDDLE Learning, Inc. (HLI), and supported by the Indiana Academic Standards. The curriculum is specifically designed to help at-risk students or those from low socio-economic backgrounds. This user-friendly curriculum serves as the perfect conduit for dropouts re-entering the educational arena. The Indiana Academic standards will be used as ‘benchmarks’ at each grade level to demonstrate that students are making progress through the curriculum. Thus each student is able to have an individual plan for learning that is benchmarked against the Indiana standards and prepares the student for the Indiana Qualifying Exam.

At FHHLC, computer-based technology, A+LS management system, and Direct and Constructivist instructional methods will be combined with other instructional materials that match Indiana standards. Additional materials such as on-line resources and materials developed by HUDDLE Learning, Inc. will serve as an addendum to the curriculum.

#### Example exit standards for mathematics, English/language arts, and social studies.

HLC will use the Indiana Academic Standards as exit standards for math English/language arts, and social studies. Full descriptions, examples and documentation of the Indiana Academic Standards are available at [www.doe.state.in.us/standards/](http://www.doe.state.in.us/standards/). The exit standards reflect the content and format of the Indiana Academic Standards.

#### HLC promotion policies.

Because HLC is a high school, progression/promotion is based on accumulated credits rather than extenuating circumstance, e.g. social promotion, age, etc. The number of earned credits required to advance to the next grade level is based upon the core forty course or the chosen diploma requirements set forth by the Indiana State Department of Education.

HLC will require a 70% mastery of all state standards with at least a “C” average at the 12<sup>th</sup> grade level for graduation. In addition, a portfolio will be maintained for each student and each student will have a clear checklist of what he or she is supposed to learn (and the A+ software will provide feedback on where the student is in achieving that standard). A teacher will document completion of each student, and that evidence will be contained in the portfolio.

### **C. Curriculum**

The goal of the Flanner House Higher Learning Center is to provide support services to youth and facilitate an academic program that will effectively target, support, and reach present and potential school drop-outs. The Learning Center has an academic curriculum that includes all core subjects, including math, language arts, science, history, social studies, and economics/government. In addition, fine arts, physical education, life-skills, and electives will be offered within the curriculum.

The Indiana standards will be the basis for course objectives, content, and skills to be taught in the main subject areas at each grade level. Each student will be given the opportunity to master the standards in all content areas. Continual emphasis will be placed on Indiana standards and interwoven throughout the components of instruction. The Learning Center will use the standards descriptions as lesson plan guides along with the HUDDLE Learning, Inc. (HLI) computer-based technology software

specifically designed to help educate at-risk students. This innovative academic computer-based curriculum will be strategically aligned with the Indiana standards.

The emphasis of the HLI software will be on the core subjects of math, language arts, science, and social studies. Each lesson follows the pattern of study, practice, test, and often an optional essay.

## **English/Language Arts**

### **9-12 Grades**

#### Reading: Reading Comprehension

Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They analyze the organizational patterns and evaluate author's arguments and positions. In addition to regular classroom reading, students read a wide variety of classic and contemporary literature, poetry, magazines, newspapers, reference materials, technical resources, and online information.

## **Mathematics**

### **9-12 Grades**

#### Algebra and Functions

Students solve simple linear equations and inequalities. They interpret and evaluate expressions involving integer powers. They graph and interpret functions. They understand the concepts of slope and rate.

#### Geometry

Students deepen their understanding of plane and solid geometric shapes and properties by constructing shapes that meet given conditions, by identifying attributes of shapes, and by applying geometric concepts to solve problems.

## **Science**

### **Grades 9-12**

#### Biology

Students work with the concepts, principles, and theories that enable them to understand the living environment. They recognize that living organisms are made of cells or cell products that consist of the same components as all other matter, involve the same kinds of transformations of energy, and move using same components as all other matter, involve the same kinds of transformations of energy, and move using the same kinds of basic forces. Students investigate, through laboratories and fieldwork, how living things function and how they interact with one another and their environment.

#### Chemistry

Students begin to conceptualize the general structure of the atom and the roles played by the main parts of the atom in determining the properties of materials. They investigate, through such methods as laboratory work, the nature of chemical changes and the role of energy in those changes.

## **Social Studies**

### **Grades 9-12**

#### US History

Students will trace and summarize key ideas, events, and developments from the Founding Era through the Civil War and Reconstruction, 1775 to 1877. Students will examine the political, economic, social, and cultural development of the United States during the period from 1870 to the

present. Students will examine the causes and course of World War II, the effects of the war on the United States society and culture, and the consequences for United States involvement in world affairs. Students will conduct historical research that includes forming research questions, developing a thesis, investigating a variety of primary and secondary sources, and presenting their findings with documentation.

### US Government

This course provides a framework for understanding the purposes, principles, and practices of American government as established by the United States Constitution. Students are expected to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens and how to exercise these rights and responsibilities in local, state, and national government.

### Economics

This course examines the allocation of scarce resources and the economic reasoning used by people as consumers, producers, savers, investors, workers, voters, and as government agencies. Key elements include the study of scarcity, supply and demand, market structures, the role of government, national income determination, money and the role of financial institutions, economic stabilization, and trade.

## **Two Sample Lesson Plans**

### **Lesson # 1**

Primary Subject – Social Studies

Secondary Subjects – Language Arts

Grade level 11-12

Lesson – Envisioning “the Other”: A Chicana Tells Her Story

Indiana Standards: *Social Studies*

5.5.1 – Describe basic needs that individuals have in order to survive, such as the need for food, water, shelter, and safety, and give examples of how people in early America adapted\* to meet basic needs.

5.5.5 – Analyze traditional arts: including folk tales and narratives that depict the experiences of ethnic, racial, and religious groups in different regions of the United States.

Indiana Standards: *Language Arts*

11.2.5 – Analyze an author’s implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject

11.3.1 – Analyze characteristics of subgenres, types of writings such as satire, parody, allegory, and pastoral that are used in poetry, prose plays, novels, short stories, essays, and other basic genres.

11.3.3 – Analyze the ways in which irony, tone, mood, the author’s style, and the “sound” of language achieve specific rhetorical (communication) or aesthetic (artistic) purpose or both.

### Objectives:

Students will:

- Compose a reflective journal to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of the young girl in “The House on Mango Street,” and then use this understanding to develop a connection with a person of another culture.
- Create an artistic rendering of the description of the house presented in “The House on Mango Street” to show an understanding of the detail and feelings of the young girl in the story toward her new house.
- Explore the word “empathy” and apply that to their understanding of the young girl in the story.

Context: Especially timely since the September 11, 2001 tragedy, it is important for students to understand cultural differences they may encounter in their community. Students will be exposed to literature written from the perspective of “the other” with the intention of creating a sense of empathy and understanding between cultures.

Resources: Transparencies with photos of Mexican Americans, Sandra Cisneros’ House on Mango Street (a collection of 44 stories), markers or colored pencils, and poster board.

Procedures/Schedule:

1. Anticipatory Set: (10 minutes) On an overhead projector, students will view photos of Mexican Americans. Use at least three photos, e.g. one presenting a stylishly dressed Mexican American pregnant woman, another presenting two Mexican American men in cowboy hats and eating yellow popsicles, and another presenting several Mexican American little girls, dancing. For each photo, students are asked to write down their first impression of the person. Ask questions like, “Is this person nice/ mean/ scared/ happy? What can you guess about this person?” For instance, upon viewing the photo of the Mexican American men in cowboy hats, the students might infer that the men work on a ranch. Discuss their reactions, and give them the “true” background stories of each of the people in the photos as related to you by the photographer. Briefly review the term “stereotype,” and prepare to read the story. The students will turn in what they have written, and later, the students will compare their initial reaction to the photos to their reactions at the end of the unit.
2. Students will receive books or handouts of the story “The House on Mango Street.” They will receive art materials—poster board and markers (5 minutes).
3. Class will read the story, “House on Mango Street” together in class (10 minutes).
4. After reading the story, students will be asked to draw their own visualization of the house on Mango Street (10 minutes).
5. Discussion of story/ student reactions (15 minutes).
6. Assign/explain homework assignment (5 minutes).

Homework: Students will be given a writing assignment in which they reflect on the girl’s situation in “A house on Mango Street.” Can they relate to her feelings? Students will also be asked to read “My Name” and “Laughter” for the following class period. The students will be instructed to pay attention to details that signify Mexican American culture. For instance, in “My Name” the main character talks about the different meanings her name has in Spanish and English.

Student Assessment:

The assignments are worth 80 points total.

- Photo Notes: 10 points
- Reflective Piece: 25 points
- Artistic Rendering: 25 points
- Class Participation: 20 points

Photo notes:

- Students write down appropriate remarks about each photograph, and make connections between their own experiences (10 points).

Reflective piece:

- Demonstrates an understanding of the girl's attitude based on the reading. For instance, the reflective piece might include an example of a time when the student was embarrassed about his or her home, clothes, car, etc. (25 points).

Artistic rendering:

- Poster is appropriate-there is evidence of student understanding of the description of the house presented in the story. For instance, the girl is ashamed of her house, so it is probably not a beautiful place (15 points).
- Poster demonstrates an understanding of the culture, based on the readings (10 points).

Class Participation:

- Complete photo notes, in-class art, and reflection as requested (10 points).
- Students make clear effort to reflect on each assignment, and to do each assignment to the best of their ability (10 points).

**Lesson #2**

Subject: Algebra

Grade Level: 10-12

Lesson: Solving Linear Equations  
"The Yo-Yo Problem"

Indiana Standards: *Algebra*

A1.2.1 – Solve linear equations

A1.2.2 – Solve equations and formulas for a specified variable

A1.2.6 – Solve word problems that involve linear equations, formulas, and inequalities.

A1.4.1 – Graph a linear equation

Objective: Students explore linear patterns, write a pattern in symbolic form, and solve linear equations using algebra tiles, symbolic manipulation, and the graphing calculator.

Overview of the Lesson:

The lesson starts with the presentation of the yo-yo problem. Students then complete a hands-on activity involving a design created with pennies that allows them to explore a linear pattern and express that pattern in symbolic form. Algebra tiles are introduced as the students practice solving linear equations. Working from the concrete to the abstract is especially important for students who have difficulty with mathematics, and algebra tiles help students make this transition. In addition to using algebra tiles, students also use symbolic manipulation and the graphing calculator. Finally, the students return to solve the yo-yo problem.

Materials:

- graphing calculator and overhead unit
- overhead projector
- overhead algebra tiles

For each group:

- 31 pennies
- set of algebra tiles

- graphing calculators

Procedure:

1. **Introduction of the Problem:** Explain the details of The Yo-Yo Problem to the Class.

The Yo-Yo Problem

Andy wants to but a very special yo-yo. He is hoping to be able to save enough money to buy it in time to take a class in which he will learn how to do many fancy tricks. The 5-ounce aluminum yo-yo costs \$89.99 plus 6% sales tax. Andy has already saved \$17.25, and he is earning \$7.20 a week by doing odd jobs and chores. How many weeks will it take him to save enough money for the yo-yo?

Students will calculate the total amount of money he will have to save by determining the sales tax and adding that amount to the price of the yo-yo. Before students begin to solve the problem, teacher will review linear patterns and have students practice solving linear equations.

2. **Penny Pattern Exploration:** For the second part of the lesson, students create a design in stages. The first stage is one penny surrounded by six pennies. For each successive stage, six more pennies are added to the outside of the pattern. Students will continue to make several more stages of this design with their groups. They should create a table of values using  $n$  for the stage number and  $p$  for the number of pennies used. Finally, each group will determine an algebraic rule representing the relationship between the stage number and the number of pennies used. Then have each group share its rule with the entire class.
3. **Solving Equations Using Algebra Tiles:** Teacher will distribute the algebra tiles and write the equation to be solved,  $4x + 3 = 3x - 1$ , on the board. Teacher will demonstrate the use of the algebra tiles while students work the problem with their groups. Questions will be asked to help draw out the strategies for solving the equation. Students should remember that the goal is to isolate the variable on one side of the equation. Students will accomplish this by performing the same operations on both sides of the equation. Students will check their solutions using symbol manipulation.

The second problem given to students to solve,  $3(x + 1) - 1 = 2(2x - 3)$ , involves the distributive property. One pair of students will solve the problem at the overhead using the algebra tiles; another pair of students work at the board using symbol manipulation, and the rest of the class will work in groups at their seats. In each group working at their seats, some will use algebra tiles while others will use symbol manipulation.

4. **Solving Equations Using the Graphing Calculator:** After the students have completed solving the equation,  $3(x + 1) - 1 = 2(2x - 3)$ , using algebra tiles and symbol manipulation, teacher will model solving the equation using the graphing calculator. A student, along with a peer tutor will come to the overhead and follow directions to solve the equation. After students have graphed both equations, students will look to see where the lines intersect. Teacher will adjust the viewing so that the intersection of the two lines is visible. After changing the window, students can use the trace key to find the intersection point, and examine the values in the table to determine what the  $x$ -value is when  $Y1$  and  $Y2$  are the

same. The students should see that the function values are the same when  $x=8$ . This answer agrees with the solutions determined using the algebra tiles and symbol manipulation.

5. **Back to The Yo-Yo Problem:** Review the basic facts of The Yo-Yo Problem for the students and direct them to work with their groups to solve the problem. Students will use various methods to determine the solution, including writing a symbolic equation and solving it, using the trial and error method, and using simple arithmetic. Students will go to the board and present their solutions to the class.

#### *General Assessment*

This lesson offers many opportunities for ongoing assessment. As students work in groups and as they make presentations to the class, you can evaluate their mathematical understanding. This lesson also gives students many opportunities to connect ideas from the various activities and use those ideas as they work to solve The Yo-Yo Problem. Did they see The Yo-Yo Problem as another linear pattern? What was the initial value, and what was the rate of change? Could they express this symbolically? Could they solve the symbolic representation? Do they have generally good problem solving ideas?

#### *Alignment with State Standards*

What follows is a brief example of how the work of a student in a particular subject area would be aligned with a specific state standard:

*English/Language Arts: Standard 3*

*Reading: Literary Response and Analysis*

Students will be assigned to read culturally significant works of literature, of their choosing, that reflect and enhance their study of history and social science. The selection of works may include Richard Wright's *Native Son*, (include other works).

After reading various bodies of literature, students will analyze and compare figurative language, interpret and evaluate the impact of historical ambiguities, subtleties, contradictions, and figurative language on tone, mood, and theme. For example, after reading *Native Son* by Richard Wright, compare and contrast the racial dynamics of the 1940's compared to present cultural literature.

#### *The HUDDLE System and A+ Software*

As part of the initial research behind FHHLC's design, a number of individuals closely connected to FHHLC traveled to Kansas to visit different pilot schools currently using this learning model to observe first-hand how its curriculum addresses the needs of dropouts. These included Cynthia Diamond and Pamela Poore (who serves on FHHLC's Advisory Council), Pat Rowe (a member of FHE's Board), and others associated with USA Funds. These trips clearly indicated that this type of approach could be successful locally, and without exception all observers were enthusiastic about using the HUDDLE-based curriculum at FHHLC.

FHHLC's curriculum will emphasize a combination of:

- A+ computer-assisted learning software (the key software package used by the HUDDLE program)
- Third-party software
- Coursework aligned with all state requirements and Indiana standards
- Individualized/personalized instruction
- Self-paced instruction



The American Education Corporation developed the A+dvanced Learning System, more commonly called A+, which forms the core of the HUDDLE approach. The A+dvanced Learning System (A+LS) courseware is a family of software products, providing a modular building block curriculum through which educators can build a powerful and complete integrated learning system (ALS Overview Handbook, 2002). This program is aligned to Indiana State Standards together with the following other national standards: the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), the National Science Education Standards (NSES), Benchmarks for Science, the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS), Core Knowledge, and McREL.

The main focus of the software is the core subjects of math, language arts, science, and social studies. *Each lesson follows a pattern of study, practice, testing, and often an optional essay:*

- This instructional methodology is both direct instruction and constructivist in its approach. The addition of an optional essay allows and encourages a student to pursue higher levels of mastery and learning (ALS Overview Handbook, 2002, pg 3).
- The A+ system supports direct instruction with carefully constructed and sequenced lesson content. “It is designed with the principles of gaining attention and presenting material in step-by step progression from subtopic to subtopic, with frequent assessment of student understanding before, during, and after lessons (pg. 4).”

This A+ management system enables lessons to be integrated into thematic units from across content areas, and also draws upon external Internet or other learning resources. In addition, instructors plan additional interactive learning activities within each course, called off-line projects, to integrate and culminate learning for each student.

FHHLC’s core high school subjects are accessible using A+ software, including the sciences; the language arts; history and social studies; and mathematics. These will be taught using a combination of computer learning, individualized learning plans, mentorship, and traditional classroom instruction. HUDDLE has adopted almost all high school subjects to its software framework. The accompanying chart contains the curriculum available through Community Learning Center, a concept based upon the HUDDLE program that serves high school level curriculum. Except for several courses in Fine Arts and Technology, all listed content subject areas, including all core subjects taught at the high school level, are addressed using A+ software. Again, off-line activities also can be used as supplementary material in every course.

## **FHHL Course Sequencing**

**(Based on HUDDLE A+ Software & Indiana Grad. Requirements)**

Each student develops a 4-year plan based on this chart

	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
<b>Lang. Arts</b>	English I & II	English III & IV	Communication	Communication
<b>Math</b>	Algebra I & II	Geometry I & II	Algebra III & IV	Calculus I & II/or Elective
<b>Science</b>	Biology I & II	Chem. I & II	Physics I & II	
<b>Social Studies</b>	World History	US History	Econ/Gov.	US Geography or Elective
<b>PE &amp; Health</b>	PE/Health	PE/Health		
<b>Technology</b>		Tech. or Elective	Tech. or Elective	
<b>Fine Arts</b>	Fine Arts	FA or Elective		
<b>Electives</b>		Elective	Elective	Elective

Students must take at least two credits in technology as part of their Elective requirements.

<b>Electives</b>	<b>Technology</b>	<b>Fine Arts*</b>	<b>Communication Courses</b>	<b>Graduation Requirements</b>
College Readiness	Intro to CLC Technology	Intro to Art	Intro to Reading	<b>40 Credits</b>
ACT Prep	Intro to Microsoft Word**	Intro to Humanities	Reading Skills	Lang. Arts - 8
ASVAB Prep	Intro to Internet and E-mail	Art History	Reading Workshop	Math - 6
Teacher Asst.	Basic Keyboarding**	Self Guided Art Class	Directed Reading in Lit.	Science - 6
Community Service	Advanced Keyboarding**		Creative Writing	Social Studies - 4
Parenting			Comm. in the workplace	PE - 1
World Geo. Asian or Western			Life & Employability Skills	Health - 1
Vietnam Experience				Fine Arts - 2
US Geography				Electives - 12
				Pass GQE

All of the above are sequenced and taught with HUDDLE A+ software curriculum except courses with an asterisk, which require additional software packages. Optional materials may be added to all courses.

### *Effectiveness of the HUDDLE Curricular Approach*

A study designed by a researcher at Middle Tennessee State sought to determine the effect of the use of this A+ software on student achievement in mathematics in a Middle Tennessee high school.

The central research question addressed in the study was: “Will the use of A+ software once per week produce a higher level of achievement as measured by a twelve-week test?” The study found that students that received computer-assisted instruction had a gain 110% higher than those students that received only traditional teaching methods.

- Students in Algebra I in the experimental group had a gain 100% higher than the control group.
- Students receiving computer instruction in the Algebra II classes scored 23.2% higher than the control group.
- The study found that overall those students who received this computer-assisted instruction only one hour a week had a gain 71.48% higher than the control group, which only received traditional teaching methods. (<http://www.amered.com>).

We have also included as Appendix D an evaluation and summary, plus comments by at-risk middle and high school students enrolled in a HUDDLE-based summer school program sponsored by the Turner Middle School and the Quest Community Learning Center in Kansas. This program was designed to help struggling students make up failed credits, especially in cases where the lack of credits meant a lack of promotion to the next grade (or to high school from middle school). All students were selected from the bottom quartile of their respective classes, classifying them very much at risk of not completing high school or going to college. All had received negative comments from teachers, parents and other students regarding their abilities. Most were using individual computer-assisted course content for the first time.

In a description by the Sallie Mae Fund, “*The purpose of this program was threefold. First, to assess each student for skill deficits using diagnostic and prescriptive software and provide remediation using computer-based instruction; second, to focus parents and students on the importance of setting higher education expectations for school performance; and third, to introduce students and their parents to the college-campus setting.*” These goals are shared closely with FHHLC. (The complete Sallie Mae Fund news release concerning this program is also contained in Appendix D)

The program enabled 50 of 65 enrolled students to be promoted to the next grade, when they would otherwise have been retained at their previous grade level. Based on the results, the school district is preparing to install a school-day program to serve 160 at-risk students.

Typical of student comments included:

“I can’t say that I enjoyed being here, but I failed two classes and did this to myself. . . . I found it much easier to learn from the A+ Program than from a regular classroom. . . . Hopefully, I will graduate next year and get my diploma and never have to come back. I mean this in a good way.”

“I liked this kind of class because I could work at my own pace. I don’t have to do lessons I already know, and I can spend more time on the ones I had trouble with.”

## **D. Assessment**

Because we are dealing with a largely at-risk student population, assessment will play a larger role at FHHLC than in most other high schools. Students may have previously dropped out and thus span a somewhat wider range of age and grade levels. Many may be far older than their grade level achievement would indicate.

FHHLC will adopt multiple tools to assess not only academic achievement, but also areas such as student and parent satisfaction, community service, and student attitudes. We will use both standardized and alternative assessments to measure not only academic achievement, but also attitude, perseverance, aptitude and other factors that can help to determine success within this student population. (These have been detailed, for example, in Measuring Up, a study of alternative rubrics compiled by Chicago charter schools, under the sponsorship of the Walton Family Foundation.)

The HUDDLE approach greatly augments more traditional assessment strategies:

This model allows each student to be accurately assessed in all subject areas upon first entering the school, to permit a specific program to be constructed around each one's individual needs and skills. With the aid of computer tracking, each FHHLC student will know what they've learned at the end of each day, and the school's administration and faculty will also be able to determine who learned what, and at what level.

Each student will have an individual learning path to achieve the Indiana standards. Progress will not be based on "seat time" but "performance based."

Almost all students who have enrolled in a HUDDLE program have commented on the advantage of allowing all participants to progress at their own pace--and to focus on areas where they lack skills rather than those they've already mastered.

### *A+ Assessment Rubrics*

The Flanner House Higher Learning Center will use multiple measures of student progress, starting with the A+LS management and assessment system. Since FHHLC will be organized as a "performance based" school environment, the order and progression of the A+LS system is well adapted to the philosophy of the school. The A+LS system starts with a pretest to determine the learning level and knowledge of the student. This assessment engine is benchmarked against the State of Indiana's standards and the capabilities of each individual.

From this assessment information, an individual learning plan is developed, again using the A+LS management system. A student completes assigned learning activities while on-going assessment occurs at critical junctures along the learning path. Assessment is continuously embedded in the learning process. A post-test is administered to determine mastery of the prescribed content. If a student fails to show mastery, additional activities are recycled through the student's learning path before anyone is allowed to progress to other learning activities. This procedure is followed in all core content areas.

Individual student assessment information and individual student learning time can be aggregated by the A+LS management and assessment system to course level content or to address the needs of multiple students. Third-party software can also be added, and their learning activities accounted for, within the same system. By aggregating student information, instructors are able to see which students need additional learning assistance, and in which areas.

In addition to this built-in assessment mechanism, students will be administered specific Indiana assessments at appropriate times, matched against their learning content areas. The Indiana Graduation Qualifying Exam (GQE) will be administered to all eligible students, and all students will need to pass the exam prior to graduation or completion of learning activities. *Students can qualify for taking the GQE whenever their A+LS assessment profile indicates that they are ready to pass the exam.* In addition, an instructor's professional judgment, in the form of a written recommendation, will be required. The instructor will document that the student's learning A+LS profile has adequately prepared him or her, and that the instructor believes the student is ready for the exam.

### *State-Mandated Assessments*

Other assessments are mandated by state law. (Note that grade levels in our program are not determined by age, but by the number of credits accumulated by an individual student.)

- 10<sup>th</sup> Graders will take the ISTEP in English/language arts and mathematics.
- All grades will be tested using the Terra Nova exams. While not mandated for all grade levels, FHHLC feels that these exams will provide very useful performance feedback to both individual students and the entire school against a common and repetitive benchmark.
- FHHLC will also adopt five mandated criteria for those students who don't pass the GQE. They include: (1) a 95% attendance rate; (2) having taken all required courses; (3) completed every remedial opportunity prescribed; (4) having maintained at least a "C" average in the 22 required courses for graduation; and (5) having obtained a written recommendation from teachers in tested areas based on written documentation of achievement, including student work from every subject area (including portfolios, coursework, other testing, Core 40 exam scores, etc.)
- Any student in the 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade who has not passed the GQE will be given an opportunity to retake it in the spring and fall of each year (for a total of 5 times).

### *Other Assessment Tools*

FHHLC will require students to supplement the above tools and rubrics with (1) individually-maintained portfolios; (2) student conferences with parents (if possible) and teachers and other staff; and (3) presentations before teachers, other students and community representatives. These will help to provide a comprehensive assessment of an individual student's work, give them the experience of working with and giving presentations in public, force them to organize their thoughts and achievements, and provide them with confidence from personally sharing and compiling what they have accomplished.

### *Independent School Evaluation*

SchoolStart will recommend outside evaluators to undertake a comprehensive study of the school's performance towards the end of its initial academic year. This study will include interviews with students, parents and staff; observations of classroom and general school activities; a review of surveys from all school stakeholders; and a thorough evaluation of test score results and other accountability data.

### *Utilizing Assessment Feedback for Constructive Change*

The Board of FHHLC will authorize an Assessment Committee composed of board members, teachers and other staff, parents, and community members to examine all feedback from multiple assessment sources in terms of constructive change. The Committee will meet at least six times a year to review data, create new assessment strategies, and examine the most effective and appropriate methods of disseminating this information. SchoolStart, Gwen Kelley, and other consultants will be brought in as a key part of this process. Quality and numbers of teaching staff, school spirit, program effectiveness, technology, and parent and student satisfaction are only a few of the issues to be examined. In addition, the adequacy of provisions for staff professional development will be thoroughly examined. Committee recommendations, along with assessment results from multiple sources, will be distributed to students, parents, and the community at the end of each school year, with updates whenever appropriate.

#### **D. Support for Learning**

Attendance at FHHLC is a privilege, not a right. Many people and organizations are giving hundreds of hours of time, and substantial contributions of money and supplies, to provide a second chance at FHHLC for those who fully choose to take that chance. Though we fully realize that many of our incoming students will be coming from troubled environments (and some will have been years removed from formal schooling), FHHLC will insist on a policy of strict discipline in all aspects of our school. *Our goal is not just for students to graduate, but also for them to go on and make a positive statement in the world.* Part of that is learning or relearning, if necessary, what constitutes appropriate behavior.

Special needs children may not be held to the exact standards as the general school population, but in each case expectations and responsibilities will be set for behavior, including respect, according to the individual abilities of each child.

#### *Parent Involvement*

While parental involvement has been a key to all Flanner House endeavors, and all parents at Flanner House Elementary are expected to volunteer substantial time to the school, parental involvement will likely be more limited at FHHLC because of the age, nature and composition of the student body. Many students will have previously left school and will be both working and living on their own. In fact, some will have previously dropped out because of a lack of parental concern and support. Others will have been estranged from their homes or moved to Indianapolis from another city. Still others will be living at home, and some may see their parents as a critical part of their motivational and educational worldview.

Whenever possible, FHHLC will attempt to include parents or guardians in their child's education and to use them as resources to further personal and learning goals. We will develop specific programs to include all interested parents and guardians as volunteers and mentors in the overall environment of the school, in addition to including them in student conferences and presentations. And all family members will be able to access the multiple social and other services available at Flanner's multi-service site.

Wherever possible, FHHLC will make a special effort to communicate with parents on all issues pertinent to their child's future in terms of academic work, attitude, and post-graduate options. Meetings will be set up at least quarterly to ensure that this communication remains effective. In addition, as part of our assessment strategy, parents will be surveyed annually regarding their degree of satisfaction with the school and its programs. These results will be published and distributed to all students and their families (together with other school-related assessment material that is not privileged.)

## **F. Special Student Populations**

We are well aware that a higher percentage of our student body will require specialized services than in a traditional school that does not focus on serving a dropout population. Because many students will have been out-of-school for some time, IEP's will have to be updated and all students reassessed. FHHLC will hire a half-time social worker to update all files, undertake initial assessments and ensure that all student referrals and other needs are addressed. As discussed above, the A+ assessment system will make this process far easier in terms of determining potential mastery of curricular material.

FHHLC will join FHE as a member of a special needs coop, the Indianapolis Charter Special Services (ICSS). The ICSS' Director of Special Education will interface with the DOE's Special Education Department as well as the special needs staff employed at each collaborating school to help ensure that all students receive the services they are entitled to. The Director will also help with regulatory, reporting, financial, evaluative, programmatic, and other aspects of the program, and coordinate referrals among staff at member schools.

At FHHLC, this will be supplemented by two multi-licensed special needs instructors on our staff, each working directly with students during a six-hour day (See IV B, "Human Services"). These individuals will work with the school's social worker in terms of developing assessments of individual students, and utilize their own skills as well as those of staff at other collaborative schools and agencies to provide appropriate services.

Because of the way our school day is structured, special needs teachers will work with students during one of two shifts: one from 8 am to 2 pm; or from 2 pm to 8 pm (except on Fridays, when the school day will end at 5 pm.). Additional time will be available for paperwork, reporting, meetings with parents and other service providers, and other functions. The staff will work closely with the social worker to engage teachers and parents in the process of determining appropriate services and forming Individual Education Plans (IEPs). While our philosophy remains to integrate special needs students as much as possible into the mainstream curriculum, students with exceptionally high needs may spend far more time in other work.

FHHLC views its technology format as a definite strength in working with special needs students. In the special needs arena, success in using technology has been well researched and documented. For example, Carol Holzberg's studies (in *Special Education Success Stories, Technology and Learning* (17) 2 35-41, 1996) indicate that when computers serve as key communications devices for special education students, they often provide the only effective means students have of communicating what they are able to learn. Many other researchers have found that once mastered, computer-based material is often easily translatable to special needs students.

In addition, FHHLC anticipates, and will recruit, students for which English has not been their primary language. Depending on the number of LEP students enrolled, FHHLC will contract with a licensed ESL instructor to address the specific needs of these students. This instructor will work closely with teachers, volunteer tutors, and parents, to ensure that all LEP students progress along with their

appropriate grade level. Volunteer tutors will be asked to supply additional support as needed. FHHLC will also utilize community services to consistently augment on-site instruction and practice. In addition, specialized ESL software packages will strongly supplement any off-line instruction and become a routine aspect of our ESL curriculum.

#### **G. School Characteristics**

Though they will continually consult with a teacher, FHHLC's students will be very much in charge of their learning. This is a key success strategy of the HUDDLE model:

- Students arrive at school for their scheduled time and clock in, pick up their student folder and logon to their secured program. They begin and continue working with the help of a certified teacher and assistant teacher, who are available for one-on-one help whenever necessary.
- Generally, students will focus on one or two courses at a time, and will be given choices as to what they want to study first and next.
- Students are also allowed to view their own progress at any point they choose on the computer.
- Teachers can also electronically check on each student's progress utilizing a multitude of reports available, including:
  - mastery against state standards
  - time-on-task
  - attempts made in any particular subject area
  - test scores
  - assignment lists, and
  - assessment progress.

Generally, students will be scheduled for 3-hour blocks of computer time, and most students will utilize 2 concurrent 3-hour blocks in a day. In addition to A+ software, the use of videos, Internet research, and Microsoft Office are also important to process off-line assignments.

When a student is done for the day, he or she can simply sign off, and the program will save or bookmark the individual's stopping point. That will be the same point he or she resumes working at their next school visit.

On any give day, students are continually stopping in the lab to get questions answered or pick up materials. Students will also do off-line work or reading of assigned books at home to extend their school day without being in the classroom.

In addition, all students can utilize many services and activities adjacent to the school. These include access to:

- a gymnasium and outdoor playing fields
- a new full-service library being built adjacent to the Flanner House site
- on-site social services, including counseling, housing and employment-related services
- a child development center if any students have children
- an auditorium, arboretum, and other structures being constructed as part of the capital campaign, together with numerous ongoing cultural activities.



Because students will maintain more flexible hours, they will have ample opportunity to utilize these services and activities either during non-school hours or, if directly related to their studies, during the school day.

### *Daily School Organization*

FHHLC will operate from 8 am to 8 pm Mondays through Thursdays, and from 8 am through 5 pm on Fridays. It is anticipated that most students will attend for 6 hours per day, from either 8 am – 2 pm, or from 2 pm through 8 pm (except on Fridays). Each of these time slots will have its own lead teacher and assistant teacher in charge of all work. In addition, a clerk/secretary will work in a full-time capacity. A guidance counselor and a social worker, each working half time, will overlap their hours between the two shifts (for example, working from 12 am – 4 pm).

### *Calendar*

Note that the school year has 184 days (the same as FTE).

**FLANNER HOUSE HIGHER LEARNING CENTER  
2003-04 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR**

- 08/04/03 TEACHERS REPORT FOR BEGINNING SCHOOL YEAR
- 09/02/03 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL: STUDENTS REPORT
- 10/06/03 MIDTERM
- 10/23/03 STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY TEACHER'S ATTEND CONFERENCE  
No School
- 10/25/03 STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY TEACHER'S ATTEND CONFERENCE  
No School
- 11/07/03 PARENT CONFERENCE (1ST GRADING PERIOD)  
CLASSES IN SESSION
- 11/27/03 THANKSGIVING BREAK
- 12/12/03 MID-GRADING PERIOD
- 12/12/03 STAFF DEVELOPMENT ½ DAY
- 12/22/03 CHRISTMAS BREAK
- 01/05/04 CLASS RESUMES
- 01/19/04 MARTIN LUTHER KING (CLOSED)
- 01/23/04 PARENT CONFERENCES (2<sup>ND</sup> GRADING REPORT)
- 02/18/04 MID-GRADING PERIOD
- 02/20/04 STAFF DEVELOPMENT ½ DAY
- 03/19/04 PARENT CONFERENCES
- 03/29/04 SPRING BREAK
- 04/05/04 CLASS RESUMES
- 04/22//04 MID-GRADING PERIOD
- 04/23/04 STAFF DEVELOPMENT ½ DAY
- 05/31/04 MEMORIAL DAY
- 06/09/04 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL AND PARENT CONFERENCES
- 06/10-11/04 SNOW FLEX DAYS

## **IV. Organizational Viability and Effectiveness**

### **A. Enrollment/Demand**

FHHLC will begin with 100 students in grades 9-12, expanding to its capacity of 175 students during its second and subsequent years. The school's founders chose to limit enrollment during its initial year to 100, as programs are being fully developed and tested. This enrollment number would still allow FHHLC to serve a significant student population. A total of 175 students, which FHHLC would reach the following year when start-up considerations would not be so acute, represents the capacity of the renovated facility.

FHHLC will draw its students from the thousands of youth within the public school system who are at risk of dropping out, or those that have already done so. For example, data from the 1990 Census showed approximately 6,000 residents living within a one-mile radius of Flanner House that did not have a high school diploma. Approximately 35% of these had not even completed their ninth-grade of schooling.

It is clear to a majority of residents in our community that the traditional public school system has not served them well. Many students have either dropped out of school or have not graduated with their class. The tremendous credibility and good will of Flanner House, the combination of support services Flanner House can offer, partnerships with multiple referral agencies and non-profits, a \$350,000 college scholarship fund, and the stress on learning technological skills--will all help to draw students who now want a better future. FHHLC will utilize Flanner House as a main outreach and communications center in the immediate neighborhood and surrounding community to help recruit students, including youth who are already its clients.

In addition, FHHLC will utilize referrals from the juvenile court system. There are currently far more court-appointed referrals (numbering in the hundreds) than can now be placed within the Juvenile Center School because of space limitations. Referrals by Judge Payne and other probate judges often require that students remain in school and obtain their degrees. This can be (and often is) made a part their probation agreement. FHHLC can and will explore a variety of partnership agreements that will likely result in substantial placement.

In terms of *parental demand*, Flanner House is confronted daily with a steady stream of parents of school dropouts (along with the youths themselves) desperately looking for viable options for future employment opportunities for their children. *Indeed, the degree of demand from these families was the single greatest impetus behind the creation of FHHLC.*

Currently, for example, Flanner House's Multi-Service Center sees hundreds of families a year with either a head-of-household or children who have recently dropped out, with no real opportunity to return to school. Most of these families are currently unable to support themselves economically or bring themselves up from poverty. Many of them come through the Flanner House Employment Services office, while others need some form of counseling or other services. A high percentage would greatly welcome the opportunity for their children or themselves to graduate and obtain sustainable or higher paying employment.

Libby Scott, a public relations specialist at Flanner House, will help implement FHHLC's public relations/recruiting campaign. FHHLC will fully engage its other partners, including the Indiana Black Expo, Casey Family Programs, and the United Northwest Area Development Corporation (UNWA), in making their clients and the numerous youths they serve knowledgeable about FHHLC activities and programs. The following are examples of other places and audiences that will be targeted for outreach activities:

- Schools, including public, private and alternative
- The YMCA and YWCA
- The Boys' and Girls Clubs
- Parks and recreation centers
- Neighborhood/community associations and centers, including health centers
- Other community multi-service centers
- WICK
- Private child and family service agencies
- Employment and unemployment offices
- Health and hospital corporations
- Mental health centers
- County Office of Family and Children
- The probation department
- The prosecutor's office

In addition, media outreach will be used through radio, television, newspapers and magazines, including articles and interviews highlighting the unique mission of the school. This would also include a focus on local African American and Hispanic/Latino outlets (such as Voz Latina, La Voz de Indiana, La Ola Latina Americana, La Guia de Indianapolis, Mundo Latino, WNDY, WNDI, WEDJ, WHHH, WICR, WSYW, WTLC, and WYJZ).

FHHLC will also fully utilize printed materials, including posters, brochures, handouts and displays, with particular emphasis in the immediate neighborhood in which Flanner House is located.

Finally, FHHLC will undertake public outreach activities utilizing churches and civic organizations, community and neighborhood carnivals and festivals, large conferences such as Black Expo and the Hispanic Fiesta, and exhibits and celebrations that appeal to youth.

If, as anticipated, demand exceeds capacity, FHHLC will undertake a lottery of all students who have completed applications before the closing date for applying, according to federal and state law. Any student who does not at-first gain admission will be placed on a waiting list based on his or her position in the lottery. Sibling preference will be granted.

## **B. Human Resources**

Teachers in a HUDDLE learning environment do not have assigned hours for particular classes as they would in a more traditional school. They spend their days in a coaching/tutoring mode, roaming about the computer lab to monitor and help students who are working in a particular subject area. At other times, they contact parents, interview new students, develop new coursework, grade student work, review transcripts, host visitors, plan graduations, conduct open houses, organize the environment, and attend to other tasks at hand. This requires that all teachers have a "whatever it takes" mentality.

In addition, it is of paramount importance that teachers do everything possible to motivate students and ensure that they remain interested in learning. If a student has a particular area of interest (including a subject or specialty within a field of study), a teacher might restructure a course to tie that interest to the subject content and course requirements. Particularly with a dropout population, it is obvious that the more interested the students remain in their work, the better they will do, the more they will learn, and the more likely they will be to graduate and attend college or pursue a technical/vocational endeavor.

An ideal teacher will have experience in three areas: (1) with at-risk youth at the high school level; (2) with using technology as an adjunct to teaching; and (3) with developing innovative strategies to motivate and inspire students. He or she would also have a background in a variety of core subject areas. FHHLC will solicit, both by word-of-mouth and through advertisements, as many potential candidates as possible to find the best possible teachers. Both FHHLC's principal and Gwen Kelley have a broad acquaintance with current teachers in the metro area, as does Steve Tegarten of SchoolStart (a former school principal and superintendent), and they will all recommend candidates with the qualities we seek. *We feel that the unique mission of FHHLC, together with its unusual array of resources and support services, will attract many individuals who share a particular interest in serving at-risk students.*

Professional development will be undertaken by SchoolStart and by Gwen Kelley, who recently retired from her position as Instructional Services Coordinator for the IPS Curriculum and Instruction Guidance Division. Both Gwen and SchoolStart's staff have had years of training in this area and will customize development to the needs of the school. FHHLC's staff will also visit other HUDDLE-based programs and charter schools that focus on at-risk youth, as well as attend relevant conferences and retreats.

FHHLC will evaluate staff in multiple ways (Refer also to the "Assessment" section of this proposal). This will include peer evaluation, evaluation by the school principal and School Director, and surveys of students and their families. In addition, during an independent evaluation of the school conducted at the end of its first year, professional evaluators will spend time with each staff member as well as interview students and others regarding their satisfaction levels. All of this will ensure that students are being treated with the attitude and respect they deserve, and that learning takes place as effectively as planned.

### *Staffing Needs*

Because so much learning takes place through computer use, all HUDDLE computer-based environments require far less teachers present than do traditional schools. Usually two teachers at a time supervise all students engaged at workstations, and this constitutes the core school staff. For FHHLC, each group of two teachers will work with 50 students during our first year. Additional licensed consultants will be brought in to augment computer-based programming in specialized subject areas (although almost all required subjects are covered by software models). Core staff will work as motivators, tutors, and resources for students doing on-line work. In addition to teachers, FHHLC will spend far more dollars on additional counselors (such as a guidance counselor and social worker) and other support services than a school with a more traditional student population.

Full-time staff will include *two sets* of lead and associate teachers (each working with students in 6 hour shifts, with 1 ½-2 hours additionally reserved for planning and other activities):

- 2 Lead teachers (1 FTE each). FHHLC would ideally like to find special needs instructors who could also function as lead teachers, as a lead teacher in this environment is not classroom-based, but observes and acts as a resource for computer-based learning.
- 2 Associate Teachers (1 FTE each)
- 1 Principal (1 FTE each), who will serve during rotating shifts each week.
- 1 School Director. This position will be filled by Cynthia Diamond at .25 FTE.
  - Cynthia will help ensure that students have the proper resources to stay in school and also address issues of attitude, discipline, motivation, and perseverance. She will also ensure the school has all appropriate support and work closely with FHHLC's partners.

- 1 Social Worker (.5 FTE)
  - This individual will work to ensure that all IEP's are in place, records transferred, and related issues dealt with. He or she can also act as a counselor for individual students whenever needed. This position is expanded to 1 FTE in the school's second year.
- 1 Guidance Counselor (.5 FTE)
  - This individual will focus on referrals to (1) colleges and universities (plus scheduling visits, if necessary) (2) technical and vocational training (including Ivy Tech and other institutions); (3) school-to-work/on-the-job training and employment (including working with prospective employers, and augmented by the employment staff at Flanner House); and (4) providing testing for all military assessments for students choosing to enter one of the armed forces. The counselor will also develop and offer training to students in socialization, interviewing, and organizational and other associated skills necessary for a successful post-graduate life.
- 1 Clerk/Secretary. This individual will handle duties related to:
  - Paperwork, registration and referrals of new students to the school
  - Reporting functions not undertaken by the Business Manager
  - Answering of phone calls and maintaining contact with parents (except when undertaken by individual teachers)
  - Handling school correspondence
- Deneen Owens (.5 FTE) will serve as Business Manager for FHHLC. Her duties will include ensuring all bills are paid, funds are encumbered on schedule, and financial planning.

The guidance counselor and social worker will work approximately a 12 noon - 4 pm shift to permit adequately service to students attending school throughout the day. These positions may also be shared with FHE, where these individuals may work their remaining .5 FTE. The school secretary will work from approximately 10 am to 6 pm.

*In terms of payroll, employee benefits and administration, workers compensation insurance, risk management, and all other human resource functions, FHHLC will contract with Tilson Human Resource (the same firm that is now working with FHE) as soon as it is chartered. A letter confirming that this relationship has been established is included as Appendix J. Note that in FHHLC's budget projections:*

- Benefits are calculated at 24% of salary, with 11% of this going towards the Indiana State Teachers Retirement Fund.
- Payroll taxes are calculated at 9%.

Projected salaries for staff are as follows:

	<u>2003-2004 Salary</u>
1 Principal	\$65,000
2 Special Needs Instructors/ Lead Teachers	\$40,000 ea.
2 Associate Teachers	\$33,000 ea.
1 Secretary/clerk	\$30,000
1 Social Worker (.5 FTE)	\$17,500
1 Guidance Counselor (.5 FTE)	\$17,500
1 Business Manager (.5 FTE)	\$25,000
1 School Director (.25 FTE)	\$14,600

#### *FHHLC's Part-Time Consultants*

In addition to regular staff, FHHLC will make good use of part-time consultants that can serve the school in specific areas of need. Many of these individuals have already been identified.

- Don Fast and Maureen Weiss will ensure that the HUDDLE model is working properly and set up all software and curricular-related materials.
- SchoolStart staffers (including Steve Tegarten, Jon Bacal, and Jonathan Krown) will work with a variety of start-up activities.
- Gwen Kelley will serve as Curriculum and Assessment Consultant. She will be in charge of ensuring that student needs are met, that the curriculum is working as expected, and that class and exit standards are being achieved. She will also work on professional development for all staff.
- FHHLC will hire part-time teachers to supply supplemental instruction to the HUDDLE curriculum. This might include specialized science instructors who could also direct a science lab. These individuals will either work as independent consultants or regular part-time staffers, depending on the number of hours involved in a particular subject area.
- ESL staff, depending on need. If the situation warrants, hours may range from ¼ time to almost full-time. Again, depending on hours, this individual may be a paid staffer. Unfortunately, it is impossible to determine the need until FHHLC learns more about the language issues of its students. FHHLC will ensure that it has an individual available to fill a variety of possible time scenarios.
- A technology consultant (if this position is not filled by teaching staff with related skills).
- A school nurse under contract with FHHLC will be utilized (as at FHE) whenever needed.
- Substitute teachers will be utilized when needed.

In addition to its licensed teaching staff, FHHLC will use community members as tutors and mentors to help bring each student up to his or her current grade level and abilities as well as help impart necessary social skills. Because of our relationship with Flanner House, we are strategically placed to recruit mentors for this purpose, permitting us to focus on meeting each student's individual instructional needs. Additional tutors are available through our partners, through a potential partnership with VISTA, and through the Indiana Campus Compact that provides college volunteers as tutors and other school-related tasks.

### *Special Needs Staffing*

Even with FHHLC's partnership with the special needs coop and a multi-licensed special needs director on-site at all times, we are aware that a highly at-risk population may require additional staffing. We are seeking multi-faceted special needs instructors who have a deep concern for at-risk youth and their problems, and who can also serve as leaders and motivators while possessing some administrative skills. In their dual role as lead teachers, they must also have the ability to ensure that students *without* special needs are on-track in terms of their HUDDLE-based learning programming.

As with ESL needs, we will not know the extent of our staffing needs in this area until we recruit and enroll students. And if we require additional staffing, it may range from 10 to 40 hours per week. Our best strategy is to have additional special needs instructors available if we find we will require their services to cover this contingency.

### **C. Governance and Management**

FHHLC will utilize a relatively simple governance and management plan, patterned after FHE's. FHHLC's principal governmental and management components are a Board of Directors, which maintains an Executive Committee and various other committees (financial, curriculum, facilities, etc.); a Principal; a School Director, and a Business Manager. The Board meets monthly and also has support from an Advisory Council, which meets quarterly. It currently has four members, and is developing a recruitment process to expand to 7 to 10 members within the next three months. Recommendations are now being received from numerous sources to ensure that it has representation and expertise in all key areas. The Board will participate in a retreat given by SchoolStart in the month of September that will help to define responsibilities and also establish relationships with FHHLC's other key members (principal, founders, staff and consultants). Part of the retreat will be devoted to board-only issues and limited to board members.

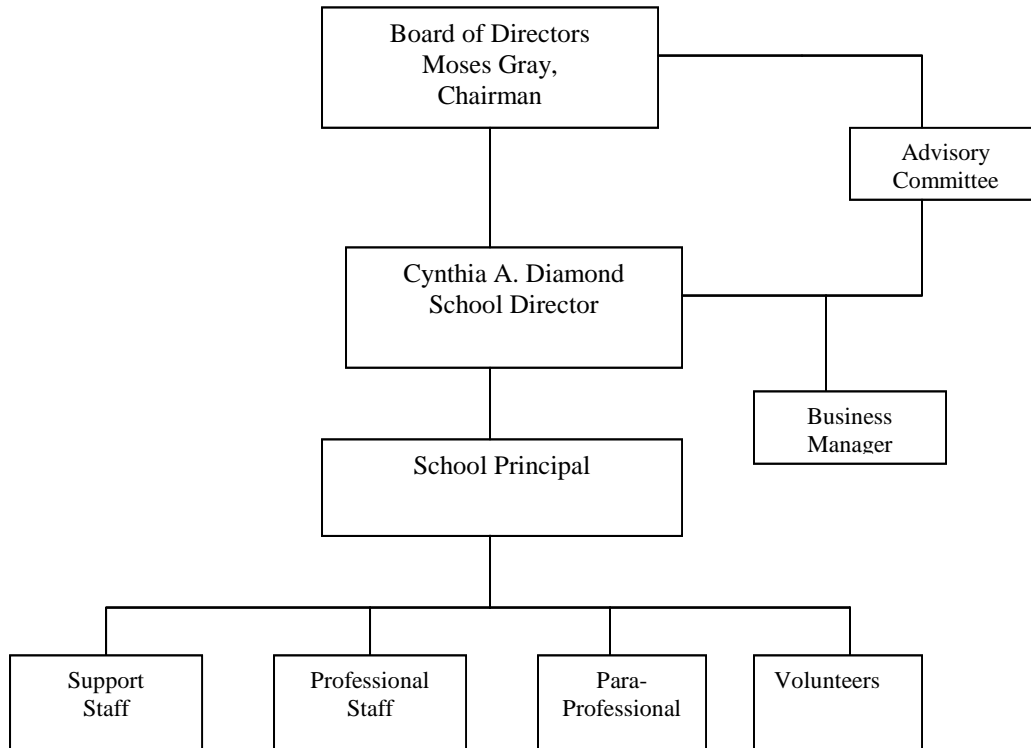
The Board of FHHLC is totally separate from all other boards on Flanner House's site, which are independently incorporated and do not share duplicate members. All boards on Flanner House's site recently attended one joint meeting to learn about and share their thoughts regarding the capital campaign, which significantly affects each one of them. Their intention is to have two joint non-voting meetings per year in the future.

After a charter is received, FHHLC will send one representative to the Association of Flanner House Schools, a new non-profit that will set common standards and participate in joint fundraising activities with other Flanner schools (such as FHE and the proposed Performing and Visual Arts Middle School). As with the capital campaign, representatives of the Association will have no voting power and all recommendations can be overturned by the FHHLC board.



## *Organizational Structure*

### **FLANNER HOUSE HIGHER LEARNING CENTER Organizational Chart**



The Principal and School Director will be in charge of all day-to-day operations, including staffing. They will serve as the main interface with parents on any special school issues beyond the responsibility of an instructor.

The Board of Directors is responsible for maintaining the innovative mission and vision of FHHLC.

- It will set general curricular policies and evaluate their effectiveness on a regular basis through a Board committee.
- It is in charge of evaluating and hiring the Principal. It will also set overall school policy and engage in strategic planning activities, including helping to draft and approve an annual budget and a longer-range financial plan.
- The Board will approve a fundraising plan and approve the accountability goals and objectives.

- It will ensure that the school follows all state and federal laws and serve as a means of appeal from any party within the school community.

Board candidates will be considered on the basis of their willingness to volunteer substantial time to the school, and their expertise in areas of relevance to the school's operations, such as finances, fundraising, law, education, and technology. As potential Board members are identified, they are interviewed and if a consensus arises as to their appropriateness, they are asked to join. The initial start-up Board will transition to a more permanent Board that will include parents and staff after the school year gets underway.

The Board will adopt a conflict of interest policy that will require full disclosure of any potential conflicts involving board members, their families, businesses, or associations of any kind. A conflict will not necessarily result in a member leaving the board, depending on its nature and whether or not it involves an area in which a board member has a vote. However, a member may be asked to leave, or take a leave of absence, if it is felt that an air of impropriety exists.

#### *Staffing*

The Principal holds responsibility for staffing decisions within the budgetary guidelines set by the Board. The Board enters into contracts with individual employees and is responsible for hiring and evaluating the Principal and School Director.

#### *Curriculum*

The Board is responsible for ensuring overall curricular policy and ensuring that FHHLC conforms to state standards and the school's vision and mission. Other curricular matters will be the responsibility of the Principal, School Director and staff.

#### *Budget and Vendor Selection*

Budget allocation and vendor selection will remain the responsibility of the School Director and/or Business Manager, depending on the particular circumstance. Overall budgetary guidelines will follow the annual budget set by the Board, which will also approve longer-range (three and five-year) strategic budgets to ensure that FHHLC remains on a sound financial footing.

#### *SchoolStart*

Contact Person:

Jon Bacal, President, 1217 Bandana Blvd. N., St. Paul, MN 55108

Tel.: (651) 295-8528 Email: jonbacal@visi.com

FHHLC is working closely with SchoolStart, a non-profit consulting group composed of individuals with charter experience that helped FHE with many aspects of the start-up process. SchoolStart is based in St. Paul, where the national charter movement was launched in 1991. It recently received a major grant from the Walton Family Foundation to help subsidize the cost of its work, in order to help support twenty-two new charter schools over the next three years. It will assist FHHLC by giving advice in the areas of finance, fundraising, governance, staff development, accountability, Board training, and other key issues, *with the aim of empowering the school community to build its own capacity for long-term success*

SchoolStart was specifically founded to offer short-term consulting to new schools and avoid the costs, long-term contracts, and external structure and management often involved in contracting with an EMO. It works with schools through the first year or two, does not charge a percentage of revenues, has foundation support, and has no fixed curriculum or prior plan for any charter. Rather, its

objective is to teach founders to fulfill their own particular vision in whatever way they see fit through offering technical advice and assistance. Its role is purely advisory, and at no time does it have any decision-making authority regarding a school matter.

SchoolStart will report to the Principal and Board regarding its activities in behalf of the school. If at any time the Board feels that it is not performing its duties as promised, its contract can be terminated.

SchoolStart will play a key role in Board and staff development, including the holding of strategic retreats and trainings. It will hold its first retreat for all board members (with other segments for school staff and founders) this fall. SchoolStart's staff has extensive experience in the area of board management and team building, as well as strategic planning, and this will be shared with both staff and board. A more comprehensive summary of services follows:

1. Coaching and advice to Board on ongoing planning and strategy, including participation in and assistance with board meetings and retreats.
2. Coaching and advice to Principal and contracted staff members on ongoing start-up and program implementation tasks.
3. Mentorship and customized leadership coaching to Principal, School Director and staff.
4. Strategy, advice and support with funding prospect identification, proposal development, solicitation, follow-up and ongoing funder relations.
5. Strategy, advice and support regarding budget development and prioritization.
6. Support, advice and support regarding Sponsor and State relations and compliance matters.
7. Strategy, advice, support and training regarding staff orientation and school culture development.
8. Confidential, periodic internal evaluation of school for use by Principal and Board (assessing both readiness to open and post-opening areas for improvement). Early evaluation results can also be very helpful for prospective funders.
9. Strategy and support with the development and refinement of the evaluation/accountability/reporting plan for both internal and external use.
10. Advice and support on school-specific, charter-specific policy development and systems implementation in all areas (esp. staffing issues and student discipline)
11. Ongoing, on-call trouble-shooting and crisis management advice upon request.
12. Strategy, advice and support with facility needs assessment, planning, search, preparation, and other facility issues.
13. Strategy, advice and support with implementation of academic program.
14. Strategy, coaching, advice and support on other areas upon request.

#### *HUDDLE Learning, Inc.*

*HUDDLE Learning, Inc.*, is a second major partner, providing consulting services through utilizing their years of experience with the design and implementation of a dropout recovery programs. Their software model is currently in use in three charter schools in Kansas. A complete description of their responsibilities and contract obligations (including 640 hours of assistance during FHHLC's first year) is included in their letter in Appendix C.

#### **Contact Person:**

Maureen Weiss, President, and Donald H. Fast, Vice-President of Educational Operations  
6319 SW 23<sup>rd</sup> St., Topeka, Kansas 66614 Tel.: (785) 273-5679 Fax: (785) 273-7120.

#### *Advisory Council*

FHHLC is also benefiting from an advisory council composed of individuals with particular expertise in areas pertaining to the school. The Council meets quarterly to provide updates on any innovations that might be used by the school, and to help spearhead any new initiatives. It also provides advice

and suggestions on questions and issues brought before it by the Board, staff or community. The Council functions in a purely advisory capacity and does not vote on any issues. Members are asked to join based on a consensus that their experience will be of value to the school community. Current members are listed under Appendix I.

#### *School Leadership*

FHHLC has already found a principal with the experience, dedication, and imagination to implement our program. He has begun to volunteer time in planning activities, and will share day-to-day leadership duties with the School Director, Cynthia Diamond. Like all other members of our staff, both the principal and School Director will receive regular evaluations both from the board and from other stakeholders (including other staff) to assess their performance and also determine areas for possible improvement. If the board receives feedback that a particular performance area requires further attention or corrective action, it may recommend professional development, consulting, or more specific strategies to address these issues.

Note that FHHLC's articles, bylaws, and a letter concerning our IRS application are included as Appendix E, F and G.

### **D. Financial Management**

Financial management responsibilities at FHHLC will be shared between the Finance Committee of the Board and the school's Business Manager, Deneen Owens.

#### *FHHLC's Board Finance Committee*

This committee will be charged with overseeing the school budget, keeping a close track of expenditures and revenues, refining the business plan, and ensuring that all fiscal controls remain firmly in place.

- It will work closely with the full board, the Business Manager, School Director and Principal to develop the budget and make any revisions as the situation demands.
- It will also approve an auditor and ensure that any financial concerns, however minor, are quickly remedied.
- It will also recommend and pursue fundraising options in consultation with SchoolStart, Flanner House, the Capital Campaign, and the Association of Flanner House Schools.
- It will develop financial procedures and controls regarding petty cash, check signing, and constraints on exceeding categories.
- It will work simultaneously on revising the present budget and developing a more detailed budget for the coming year(s).

#### *Business Manager*

Deneen Owens, FHHLC's Business Manager, will oversee the day-to-day fiscal process. Deneen is currently serving half time in that position at FHE, and will have had a full year's experience in mastering charter school fiscal accountability practices before FHHLC opens. She will:

- report to the Board and work closely with its Finance Committee.
- work closely with the school's principal to negotiate with vendors, ensure all bills are paid, and develop options for expenditures.
- work closely with the board treasurer and auditor and ensure that the auditor has all necessary materials in place.

- ensure that all reports are made to the state and other governmental entities in a timely manner, and that funds are received on schedule.

#### *Anticipated Funding Sources*

FHHLC has developed an unusual number of financial funders in addition to ongoing governmental funding:

- FHHLC has already garnered a \$210,000 grant (\$105,000 for two consecutive years) from USA Funds to support its educational activities during its first and second year. This grant will be awarded in two payments over the course of the first two operating years.
- FHHLC is also scheduled to receive \$125,000 from a \$1,000,000 special endowment fund set up as part of the current \$13,500,000 capital campaign. This campaign will also support renovation of its facility (See Appendix A, “A Commitment to Educational Excellence”). Over 200 funders will be approached with the help of a professional fundraiser. (A total of 61 were interviewed for the feasibility study alone.)
- FHHLC has also received a separate \$350,000 grant from the USA Fund to supply college scholarships for our graduates. These funds will create a unique incentive for our high school students to graduate and move on to college and technical school.
- FHHLC will also apply for a \$450,000, three-year federal start-up grant. Although this grant may be competitive, we believe our partnership with SchoolStart and Flanner House’s outstanding record for community collaboration will help us prepare a winning proposal. All of SchoolStart’s eligible partner schools have received similar competitive awards.
- FHHLC is planning on a major grant of between \$100,000 and \$140,000 (including \$10,000 in planning money) from the Walton Family Foundation, which has donated heavily to SchoolStart-supported schools (as well as SchoolStart itself).
- In addition, National City Bank of Indiana has verbalized that FHHLC will be positioned to secure a major line of credit, given Flanner House’s willingness to cross-collateralize FHHLC. *This line of credit will serve as a reserve to cover any upcoming contingency needs* (such as additional staff hiring for special needs)
- Finally, the No Child Left Behind Act has opened up considerable potential funding sources for enrichment programs (including tutoring, youth development, technology, character education, and counseling) that could be of great use to FHHLC and relieve spending allocations in those areas. Similarly, the Schools and Libraries Division will help to cover telephone, Internet and many other communication and technology services and expenses.

In addition to the above, the board will work closely with the principal, business manager, SchoolStart and other entities to develop an ongoing developmental plan to raise additional funds. This plan will be fully outlined over the next six months.

#### **E. Budget**

FHHLC will serve 9<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> graders, although grades will not be determined on the basis of age level but on credits completed. We will begin with 100 students, with a maximum enrollment of 175 reached by our second year of operations. This size will be ideal for the type of program we seek to install, and will permit extensive individual computer-based work as well as ongoing off-line classroom activities. It also will allow us to utilize the current renovated Flanner administrative as a school site.

#### **E. Budget**

Below is the budget narrative, followed by the projected 5-year budget for Flanner House Higher Learning Center.

### *Contingency Planning*

The Flanner House Higher Learning Center Board of Directors and its Finance Committee, will regularly monitor the monthly financial statements prepared by the Business Manager, along with State and other revenue projections, making budget revisions and addressing likely contingencies when necessary.

In the event of a budget shortfall, FHHLC has set aside at least 10% of its projected yearly revenues (year-end balance + Cash Reserve line items). In the event of a short-term or temporary shortfall, FHHLC anticipates the ability to draw upon a line of credit provided by National City Bank. In the event of longer-term shortfalls, FHHLC is likely to significantly trim the Classroom Technology, Instructional Software and Library line items (aggressively pursuing instead in-kind donations), slightly reduce most other non-salary line items, and only then explore further efficiencies in the Human Resources area.

### *Special Education and Transportation*

Without qualification or hesitation, FHHLC is committed to rigorously serving special needs students and providing transportation to all students who may need it. With roughly 1.0 FTE special education staffing per 100 students along with participation in the Co-op, FHHLC believes that it has allocated adequate resources in this area. If need be, FHHLC will dip into its cash balance to provide additional resources in both special education and transportation.

### **Revenue Assumptions**

*Carry-over + reserve from previous period.* This represents fund balance remaining from the previous year.

*State Per Pupil Funding.* Based on the Indiana Department of Education's school formula estimates for Calendar Year 2003 (made available to the Indiana Charter Resource Center in late 2002) This formula includes State Regular aid, Levy funds, Auto Excise funds, Special Ed, and At Risk funds. We assume that approximately 80% of our students are resident in Indianapolis Public Schools (average of \$6,700 per student annually), with the balance from other nearby districts (average of \$5,500 per student), yielding a blended average of approximately \$6,600 per student in year one. We estimate that state per pupil revenues will increase 2.5% annually.

*State and Federal Discretionary Grants.* Includes competitive state grants such as Safe Schools and technology initiatives, the new No Child Left Behind and Literacy-related grants, and other programs.

*Federal Start-Up Grants.* FHHLC expects to be awarded this competitive grant, which amounts to \$150,000 per year for three years.

*Private Funds.* FHHLC has been awarded a \$210,000 gift from the USA Funds, to be divided equally between the first and second operational year. We will also receive a grant of \$125,000 from a \$1,000,000 special endowment fund, part of the current capital campaign of Flanner House. We will submit an application to the Walton Family Foundation for both planning and start-up support, and will also seek other foundation, corporate and individual donations.

*Lunch Revenue.* This includes both State funds for students with free and reduced lunch classification as well as fees paid by families. We estimate this amount at \$2 per student per day for the 184-day-long school year.

### **Enrollment Projections**

2003-04	100 students
2004-05	175 students
2005-06	175 students
2006-07	175 students
2007-08	175 students

**Expenditure Assumptions:**

Assumes a 3% annual inflation rate on most items.

<u>Position</u>	Salary in 03-04	Number (03-04)	Number (04-05)	Number (05-06)	Number (06-07)	Number (07-08)
Director	\$65,000	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25
Lead Teachers	\$40,000	2	2	2	2	2
Teachers	\$33,000	3	6	6	6	6
Special Ed. Teacher	\$40,000	1	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Secretary/Clerk	\$30,000	1	1	1	1	1
Custodial Services	\$26,000	1	1	1	1	1
Social Worker	\$35,000	.5	1	1	1	1
Guidance Counselor	\$35,000	.5	1	1	1	1
Business Manager	\$50,000	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5

During the start-up year, all positions will be contracted, not salaried.

*Payroll Taxes.* Calculated at 9% of salaries.

*Benefits.* Calculated at 24% of salaries. Includes health, disability, and retirement.

*Professional Development.* Includes regular training, consulting, and occasional conferences and site visits to exemplary schools.

*Substitute Teachers.* \$100 per teacher @ 10 days.

*Board Development.* Training and consulting.

**Facility**

*Rent.* Calculated at 100 sq. ft. per student at \$2 per sq ft., provided by Flanner House.

*Utilities.* Calculated at \$1.75 per square ft. with 5% annual inflation.

*Maintenance.* Repairs and cleaning supplies.

**Materials/Supplies/Equipment**

*Textbooks and other instructional supplies.* Calculated at \$200 per student for supplies, books and textbooks in year one, declines afterward.

*Assessments.* Calculated at \$100 per student.

*Instructional Equipment.* Includes Smart Boards, VCRs, scanners, LCD and overhead projectors, video and digital cameras, etc. Calculated at \$100 per student for the first two years, \$75 after.

*Classroom Technology.* Estimated at \$200 per student for the first year, \$100 in year two, and \$75 after that. Includes personal computers.

*Office Technology and Software.* Includes leasing and/or purchasing computers, printer, fax and copier; *Instructional Software and Internet Access.* Calculated at \$200 per student in first year, \$150 in the second year, \$100 subsequently.

*Library.* For book acquisitions and periodical subscriptions: calculated at \$125 per student for the first year, \$100 in years two, and \$75 subsequently.

*Classroom Furniture.* Calculated at \$125 per student the first year, \$125 per new student in year two, and \$25 per student for replacement in subsequent years.

*Office and Faculty Furniture.* Calculated at approximately \$500 per new staff member.

*Copying and Reproduction.* Estimated \$2,000 pre-operating year; Calculated at \$75 per student in years one and two; \$50 per student afterward.

*Postage and Shipping.* Estimated \$2,000 pre-operating year; Calculated at \$20 per student subsequent years.

### **Additional Costs**

*Contracted and Business Services.* Consulting services and start-up support from SchoolStart will be the large majority of this category in the start-up, first, and perhaps second years of operation. Also includes consulting related to strategic and business planning and other business services.

*Special Education Charter School Cooperative Services.* Estimated cost on participating in the Special Education cooperative, based on 2002-03 rates +\$5,000 (cost of Director of Special Education, and overhead divided by the number of participating schools).

*Insurance.* Estimate based on other charter schools. Includes all required coverage.

*Marketing Development.* Consulting and material costs for student recruitment activities and public relations, including cost of producing brochures and materials.

*Legal Expenses.* Includes setting up the non-profit status of the school and review and approval of contracts.

*Accounting and Audit.* Estimated at \$3,000 for pre-operational year and \$4,000 per operating year for bookkeeping services, and \$8,000 a year for an annual audit to be conducted by a separate contractor for subsequent years.

*Transportation.* Estimated service to 50% of students at \$650 per year, with 5% annual inflation, with the remainder expected to walk, drive or take the IndyGo system.

*Field Trips.* Fieldtrips calculated at \$20 per student, 8 times a year 1<sup>st</sup> year, 10 times a year afterward.

*Food Services.* Calculated at \$2.00 per day per student for maximum of 184 days.

*Cash Reserve.* We will put 3% of all revenues into a reserve fund, to be left untouched (and included in the following year's budget as carryover from the previous year).



**Flanner House Higher  
Learning Center**

	<b>Pre-Opening</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>
	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
<b>Projected Enrollment</b>		100	175	175	175	175
<b>I. Revenues</b>						
Carry-over from previous period	-	\$ 103,125	\$ 123,202	\$ 336,367	\$ 320,707	\$ 300,470
Per Pupil Payments	-	662,150	1,187,732	1,217,425	1,247,860	1,279,057
State and Federal Discretionary Grants	-	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Federal Grants	150,000	150,000	150,000	-	-	-
Private Funds	150,000	200,000	150,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Lunch Revenue	-	36,800	66,010	67,660	69,352	71,086
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>1,182,075</b>	<b>1,706,943</b>	<b>1,676,452</b>	<b>1,692,920</b>	<b>1,705,612</b>
<b>II. Expenditures</b>						
<b>Human Resources</b>						
Director/Principal Salary	27,000	81,250	83,688	86,198	88,784	91,448
Supervisors/Lead Teachers Salaries	-	80,000	82,400	84,872	87,418	90,041
Teachers (FT) Salaries	-	99,000	203,940	210,058	216,360	222,851
Teachers (PT) Salaries	-	-	-	-	-	-
Special Education Teacher	-	40,000	61,800	63,654	65,564	67,531
Clerical Salaries	-	30,000	30,900	31,827	32,782	33,765
Custodial Salaries	-	26,000	26,780	27,583	28,411	29,263
Social Worker (.5 FTE in year 1)		17,500	36,050	37,132	38,245	39,393
Guidance Counselor (.5 FTE in year 1)		17,500	36,050	37,132	38,245	39,393
Start-Up Coordinator/Business Manager (.5 FTE)	25,000	25,000	25,750	26,523	27,318	28,138
Payroll Taxes	-	38,003	53,717	55,303	56,936	58,619
Benefits	-	64,321	107,817	111,045	114,370	117,795
Consultants (PT teachers, Tech., Curric., Assess., etc.)	20,000	120,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
Professional Development	5,000	10,000	10,300	10,609	10,927	11,255
Substitute Teachers	-	6,000	9,500	9,500	9,500	9,500
Broad Recruitment	-	-	-	-	-	-
Board Development	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Other Human Resources Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Human Resources</b>	<b>79,000</b>	<b>656,573</b>	<b>850,692</b>	<b>873,436</b>	<b>896,862</b>	<b>920,991</b>

<b>Facility</b>						
Rent	-	20,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Mortgage	-	-	-	-	-	-
Renovation/Construction	-	-	-	-	-	-
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-	-
Utilities	-	26,250	32,156	33,764	35,452	37,225
Maintenance	-	5,000	5,150	5,150	5,150	5,150
Other Facility Expenses						
<b>Total Facility</b>	-	51,250	72,306	73,914	75,602	77,375
<b>Materials/Supplies/Equipment</b>						
Textbooks and Other Instructional Supplies	2,500	20,000	35,000	26,250	26,250	26,250
Assessments	-	10,000	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500
Instructional Equipment	-	10,000	17,500	13,125	13,125	13,125
Classroom Technology	-	20,000	17,500	13,125	13,125	13,125
Office Technology and Software	10,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Instructional Software/Internet Access	-	20,000	26,250	17,500	17,500	17,500
Library	-	12,500	17,500	13,125	13,125	13,125
Office and Faculty Furniture	5,375	2,250	1,000	500	500	500
Classroom Furniture	-	12,500	9,375	4,375	4,375	4,375
Copying and Reproduction	2,000	7,500	13,125	8,750	8,750	8,750
Postage and Shipping	2,000	2,000	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
Telephone/Fax Lines/Long Distance	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Other Materials/Supplies/Equipment	2,000	5,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
<b>Total Materials/Supplies/Equipment</b>	24,875	128,750	168,250	127,750	127,750	127,750
<b>Additional Costs</b>						
Contracted Services/Business Services	55,000	55,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
Special Education Cooperative	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	30,000	30,000
Insurance	-	20,000	21,000	22,050	23,153	24,310
Marketing/Development	25,000	15,000	10,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Legal Expenses	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Accounting/Audit	3,000	12,000	12,600	13,230	13,892	14,586
Transportation	-	32,500	59,719	62,705	65,840	69,132
Field Trips	-	16,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Food Service	-	36,800	66,010	67,660	69,352	71,086
Cash Reserve @ 3%	9,000	32,369	47,512	40,203	41,166	42,154
Other/Miscellaneous	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
<b>Total Additional Costs</b>	102,000	254,669	326,841	320,847	333,402	341,268
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>1,182,075</b>	<b>1,706,943</b>	<b>1,676,452</b>	<b>1,692,920</b>	<b>1,705,612</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>205,875</b>	<b>1,091,242</b>	<b>1,418,089</b>	<b>1,395,947</b>	<b>1,433,616</b>	<b>1,467,384</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
	<b>94,125</b>	<b>90,833</b>	<b>288,855</b>	<b>280,505</b>	<b>259,304</b>	<b>238,229</b>

## **F. Facility**

FHHLC will be based in a fully renovated wing of the current Flanner House building that now houses a large Child Development Center. It is located at 2424 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Street within the IPS district. This wing is now configured with large open rooms that, with relatively minor renovation, will lend themselves well to a HUDDLE-type environment. *All renovation costs will be covered by Flanner House's capital campaign*, which targets expenses for school construction and renovation. Renovation will be completed by August 2003, when the Child Development Center will move into a new adjacent facility.

The facility is all on one floor, allowing easy access to those who are physically challenged. Renovation will take into account all ADA, fire and safety codes. Bathrooms are already in place, although the height of the sinks and toilets will have to be raised. A new layout of the existing space has not yet been drawn up.

The space will be leased from Flanner House of Indianapolis, Inc., at a rent far below market rate. Although a formal lease has not been signed, we estimate the costs at \$20,000 in the school's first year, progressing to \$35,000 in subsequent years.

## **G. Transportation**

FHHLC has rethought its transportation program to ensure that all students can access the school. We have come up with four options for each student:

- encouraging carpooling, as many of our students will have vehicles. While FHHLC cannot, for insurance reasons, organize carpools, it can (with permission) publish the names and addresses of the student body, which will help facilitate this process;
- issuing Indygo bus tickets to students;
- utilizing the Flanner House bus for this purpose;
- utilizing a school bus being purchased for FHE. According to current parent surveys, this bus will be used minimally, or not at all, by incoming FHE students, almost all of whom will be dropped off and picked up by their parents at the latter's discretion; and
- making arrangements for transportation for any special needs students, using wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

## **H. Risk Management**

FHHLC's approach to risk management is to be proactive in providing as safe a school environment as possible, while also ensuring that neither the school, its board, or its partners or associates can be held liable for any claims. The principal, board and staff will develop a risk management policy that anticipates potential problem areas and ensures that appropriate procedures and policies are in place (particularly regarding areas such as automobile use, bus transportation, sexual abuse, staff and student relationships, professional conduct, incidents of violence, etc.) that will prevent any occurrences. Staff will be briefed on areas of concern during professional development meetings. School guidelines will specifically address health and safety issues, and include advice gleaned from consultations with professionals in those areas. Fire and emergency drills will be held regularly throughout the year.

FHHLC has obtained confirmation from Gregory and Appell that it will provide insurance at the limits prescribed in the proposal instructions. A letter in this regard is included as Appendix H. FHE already has successfully obtained a similar policy with that agency.

## I. Timeline

<b><i>PHASE I: GETTING STARTED</i></b>	<b>Point Persons</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	Deneen Owens Cynthia Diamond Principal	Dec. 02 – May 03
Establish new bank account for charter elementary school		
Revise recruitment, marketing & outreach plan for new students	Libby Scott	
Identify community liaisons		
Write and Design Initial Informational Materials (Brochures, General Info Sheet, Q&A Sheet, etc.)		
Print and distribute information/brochures		
Design and print other marketing materials		
Organize community presentations		
Customize language appropriate student applications		
Organize recruitment campaign, make phone calls		
Answer parent phone calls, run open houses		
Sign up Sheets for Parents/Students		
Parent liaison/register students, interview parents		
Begin Recruitment of two new teachers		

<b>INSTRUCTION &amp; ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>Point Persons</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	Gwen Kelley; Principal	Dec 02.- March 03.
Plan for classroom/learning environment configuration		
Complete plan for HUDDLE curriculum and address any off-line needs.	HUDDLE, Inc.,	
<b>FINANCIAL PLANNING &amp; FUNDRAISING</b>	<b>Point Persons</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	Dennen Owens, SchoolStart	Jan. 02- April 03
Modify five-year planning budget and business plan based on any new info. from State		
Refine accounting, purchasing, payroll and state reporting systems		
Refine and Implement fundraising plans		
Prepare and submit application for federal start-up funds		
Prepare and submit grant applications as needed		

<b><u>PHASE II: PREPARATION FOR OPENING</u></b>	<b>Point Persons</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL</b>	Cynthia Diamond, Principal	March-June 03
Develop immunization policy		
Develop medication, nursing, and first aid policy		
Develop transportation policy		
Develop fair enrollment policy		
Develop sexual, religious, and racial harassment & violence policy		
Obtain Fair Pupil Dismissal Act		
Obtain the Mandatory Report of Abuse and Neglect		
Obtain the American with Disabilities Facility checklist		
Revise and expand comprehensive school accountability plan, if necessary		
<b>INSTRUCTION &amp; ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>Point Persons</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	Gwen Kelley, Principal	Feb.-July 03
Review and amend instructional program plan		
Review and amend curriculum/projects/units		
Identify & secure all instructional materials & technology using a tracking system, and dully integrate with HUDDLE	Tech. Consultant, HUDDLE, Inc.	
Install and test HUDDLES curriculum and A+ software	HUDDLE, Inc.	
Review and amend assessment plan		
<b>PLANNING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS</b>	<b>Point Persons</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	Special Needs Coordinator + ICSS Director	Ongoing.
Identify students whose applications indicated IEPs		
Review and assess need for IEPs		
Confer with parents regarding special education needs during registration period		
Devise plans for serving special education students		
Coordinate schedule for special education students		
Work with parents to develop or revise IEPs as needed		
Convey special education plans to special ed. teachers and other regular Ed teachers		
Undertake complete ESL assessment		
Establish framework for assignment to specific ESL programming		

<b>FACILITIES</b>	<b>Point Person</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	Sandy Green	Jan.-Aug. 03
Continue with capital campaign to renovate facility		
Organize renovations, repairs & construction		
Renovate present site to add two classrooms for next year		
Secure initial architectural planning & advice		
Put out bids for general construction contractor, if necessary		
Monitor construction progress		
Purchase and move in new furnishings for two additional classrooms		
Arrange classrooms/instructional & work environments		
Secure all inspections for fire, safety, and other codes		

<b>STAFFING</b>	<b>Point Persons</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	Principal, Cynthia Diamond	Jan.-May 03
Revise, if necessary, needs assessment for additional hiring		
Identify options & plan recruitment strategy		
Develop new staff selection process		
Draft, approve and run ad		
Contact Universities/Colleges and other networks		
Receive, organize, and review letters of interest/resumes		
Interview, & background reference checks		
Finalize selections, criminal background check & finger printing (including all staff and regular volunteers)		
Orientation & planning for new students		
Advise staff on legal and regulatory compliance		
Establish Year 1 staff development plan including para-professionals		
Implement immediate staff development activities		

<b>STUDENTS &amp; PARENTS</b>	<b>Point Person</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	Principal	Feb.-July 03
Accept and review applications		
Monitor diversity & outreach		
Conduct enrollment lottery if applications exceed space at any grade level		
Registration & assessment		
Public notice of special education services		
Approve applications		
Send updates to parents and perspective students on a monthly basis		
Family/Student Orientation		
Plan and implement open houses		
Orientation Packets to all parents and students		
Plan and implement Grand Opening		

<b>FINANCE &amp; OPERATIONS</b>	<b>Point Person</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	Business Manager	Ongoing
Review current budget development & oversight policies		
Full implementation of accounting system		
Oversight and decision-making of accounting system		
Review internal controls & fiscal policies		
Full implementation of payroll system		
Oversight and decision-making of payroll system		
Review staff benefit options		
Oversight and decision-making of staff benefit options		
Research and recommend auditing options		
Establish and maintain fiscal linkages with state		
Develop long-term fiscal plans		

<b>SCHOOL OPENING</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Charter School Begins Operations		Sept. 2 03
Date of School Opening		Sept. 3 03



## **V. Summary of Strengths**

Flanner House Higher Learning Center combines the history and reputation of Flanner House with a vision for a state-of-the-art learning environment specifically designed to serve at-risk youth and those who have dropped out of school. The Higher Learning Center:

- continues with the original mission of Flanner House, which since 1898 has helped people to help themselves and to become independent citizens.
- capitalizes on Flanner House's experience gained from years of working with at-risk youth and its founding of Flanner House Elementary, one of the first public charter schools in Indiana.
- can utilize Flanner House's neighborhood and community reputation and name recognition to support its initiatives.
- draws upon a long familiarity with and easy access to clients who now want to continue with their education and secure better employment.
- already has identified its principal, school director and board chair, together with much of its support staff.
- will combine recent computer innovations with a broad array of multi-faceted, wrap-around services to help ensure that students stay in school.
- has built a solid base of financial, advisory, technical, volunteer, and other collaborative support.
- has partnered with USA Funds to provide \$350,000 in scholarships for its graduates
- has secured a facility that will be fully renovated for its opening.
- offers a site that includes a nearby gym, playing fields, an adjacent library, and numerous other amenities.
- will incorporate specially designed educational and assessment software and programs to ensure that all students progress at their own pace.
- will motivate its students through fostering the discipline, spirit and mentorship that permeates Flanner House itself.